TRADITIONAL THAI HISTORIOGRAPHY AND ITS NINETEENTH-CENTURY DECLINE

by

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MEMORANDUM

I declare that this thesis represents my own unaided work except where otherwise acknowledged.

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Abstract

This is a study of traditional Thai historiography and its nineteenth-century decline. It divides into two main parts. Part One consists of two chapters, and deals with traditional Thai historiography centring on the tamnân and the phongsawadân, which are the chief sources of early Thai history. With regard to tamnân, "religious", histories, it concentrates on the works of the old Lân-Nâ Thai kingdom (C13th-1558). It also points out the intimate relationship between Buddhist myths and local history, and the complexities of tamnân historiography. In doing this, it identifies the dominant themes from the Mahāvaṃsa and the influences of Burman/Mon-derived traditions in the northern Thai chronicles. In his assesment, the writer expresses his doubt about their historical value.

Phongsâwadân historiography is the subject of Chapter Two. Secular in nature, the phongsâwadân, "dynastic", histories, were compiled to bolster the image of the Siamese kings in the light of a Hindu-Buddhist "God-King" cult. It is suggested that phongsâwadân histories, compiled during the Ayutthayâ period (c.1351-1767), are generally more reliable than the post-Ayutthayâ recensions. In connection with this evaluation, the writer supports his claim by a detailed analysis of the narrative style and chronological patterns of all the known phongsâwadân concerning the Ayutthayâ period.

Part Two of the thesis is devoted to discussion of the decline of traditional Thai scholarship in general, and traditional Thai historiography in particular. It draws heavily on contemporary literary sources to show that during the 1830s,

a process of change in the Siamese world-view and perception of the past had already taken place as a result of Siamese acceptance of Western ideas. The intellectual impact of the West and the constant threat of Western imperialism in the second half of the 19th century helped to create a national consciousness amongst the Thai, and led to the creation of a Thai nation-state. It was against this background that national historiography was conceived, and traditional historiography became a thing of the past.

To my late parents

Preface

In attempting to write this thesis I have been prompted by several motives. First, despite the fact that modern research has been going on in almost all fields of Thai studies since the 1960s, there is surprisingly not even a single volume written about the intellectual history of Thailand. Historiography, as a research subject, has now received the due attention of specialists in the field, but obviously it is still in its infancy, especially in the area of traditional Thai historigraphy. Second, since the mid-1960s, a great many more historical documents have been discovered and published, and new facts concerning Thai history have come to light; it is, I think, time for a historian to re-examine the Thai sources and offer fresh reinterpretations. Third, I personally feel that historians in the past have tended to ignore the wealth of Thai literature, given the fact that history and literature in old Siam, i.e. the pre-June 1932 days, were not entirely separable.

The object of this study is to place traditional Thai historiography in the perspective of Thai cultural and literary development as well as against the historical background of old Siam. Equally necessary is to describe the internal changes that took place in 19th-century Siam, and the impact of the West upon Siamese intellectuals over that same period. Siam is unique amongst the countries of South-East Asia, at least in the sense that she remained independent throughout the nineteenth century, whereas her neighbours fell victims to Western imperialism. On this count alone, the history of

19th-century Thai intellectuals in general, and the decline of traditional scholarship and historiography brought about by Western learning in particular, deserve full treatment, considering that Westernized intellectuals in Siam emerged outside the colonial context. In doing this, however, one has to look farther afield than the princely élite's well-publicized achievements, and break the monopoly of official historiography, in order to understand the real 19th-century Siam. The implication of this study is that, in so far as the internal development of 19th-century Siam is concerned, a great deal more remains to be written, or at least, reappraised.

The Subject

As a Thai, who grew up in the 1950s, the present writer, like most his compatriots, was inculcated with nationalistic ideas, and influenced by the 20th-century Thai view of history, which sees the development of the Thai nation as the final result of a monolithic movement, beginning with a Thai 'homeland' somewhere in China and ending at Bangkok. As a student, trained in history in the West, one acquires the best of both worlds; having come from the culture one has the 'feel' of what one purports to describe, and at the same time, is able to look back at the course Thai history with some degree of detachment..

Early Thai history has always been an obscure subject, owing to the fragmentary nature of eqigraphic sources, and the unreliability of local chronicles, which are late compilations. It is a fact that no detailed history of Thailand prior to the sixteenth-century arrival of the Europeans, can

satisfactorily be written. But surprisingly, it was not until recently that early Thai historiography became a serious subject. The anti-Eurocentric trend of the past two decades was chiefly reponsible for the revived interest in the indigenous sources of South-East Asia.[1] In the case of Thailand, early Thai history and historiography was given stimuli by the works of A.B. Griswold and Prasert ṇa Nagara in their Epigraphic and Historical Studies series in the Journal of the Siam Society, and even earlier by Mânit Wanliphôdom's revision of the Tamnân Singhanawatikumân.[2] Chit Phûmisak's Khwâm Pen Mâ Khǫng Kham Sayâm Thai Lâo Lèh Khǫm, "History of the Terms Sayâm, Thai Lâo, and Khǫm", which was prefaced by Charnvit Kasetsiri and published posthumously by the Social Science Association of Thailand in 1976, was arguably the most influential work of the decade, not only because it was the first serious work produced by a talented Marxist historian, but also because Chit used the tamnân sources extensively in the reconstruction of early Thai history, and at the same time, condemned the 'official' phongsâwadân histories for their excessively dynastic approach.[3]

Chit's view of the Thai sources, i.e. tamnân, "religious", histories vs. phongsâwadân, "dynastic", histories, is echoed in Charnvit Kasetsiri's The Rise of Ayudhya, a synthesized

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1) See for example, K. Shariff, "Sejarah Melayu as a Historical Source", Journal of the Historical Society of the University of Malaya, 2 (1963/4): 41-50

2) Reprinted as Mânit Wanliphôdom, Tamnân Singhanawatikumân Chabap Sǫpkhon, "Tamnân Singhanawatikumân, A Revised Version", Historical Commission Publications, 1973.

3) Chit Phûmisak, Khwâm Pen Mâ Khǫng Kham Sayâm Thai Lâo Lèh Khǫm, Bangkok, 1976: 118, 169.

history, which is based mainly on the tamnân traditions.[4] D.K. Wyatt, in his interesting survey of the indigenous sources of Thai history, talks of the various chronicle traditions in the northern Thai tamnân, apparently suggesting that they deserve a full investigation.[5] Michael Vickery, whose critical and clinical approach to the Thai sources represents a radical new trend in the study of Thai historiography, has brought to the fore the many problems of giving too much credence to the tamnân sources.[6] Also, he has taken to task traditional historians for failing to recognize the intrinsic weaknesses of tamnân and phongsâwadân historiography.

This reappraisal of the Thai sources is necessary for two obvious reasons. A historian needs to take into account new materials, which are now available. The present, 20th-century Thai view of ancient history, seen through the eyes of official Thai historiography, and centred upon the kingdom of Sukhôthai (C13th-15th), Ayutthayâ (c.1351-1767), and Bangkok, is totally 'Siamese'-biassed. The distortion is most obvious in Thai standard textbooks on early Thai history in which the rôle of independent Chiang Mai in the North (C13th-1558) has been played down almost to insignificance. In the light of modern research, what, until now, have been considered standard

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4) Charnvit Kasetsiri, The Rise of Ayudhya, Kuala Lumpur, 1974.

5) D.K. Wyatt, "Chronicle Traditions in Thai Historiography", in C.D. Cowan and O.W. Wolters, (eds), Southeast Asian History and Historiography, Essays presented to D.G.E. Hall., Cornell University Press, 1976: 107-22.

6) M. Vickery, "The Lion Prince and Related Remarks on Northern History", JSS, 64, 1 (Jan. 1976): 326-77
& "Review Aritcle: A New Tāmnān About Ayudhya", JSS, 67, 2 (July 1979: 123-82.

textbooks on Thai history -W.A.R. Wood's A History of Siam (1926) and H.G. Quaritch Wales' Ancient Siamese Government and Administration (1935) and Siamese State Ceremonies: Their History and Function (1931), for instance- must now be regarded as obsolete, if not thoroughly misleading in certain aspects.

In treating traditional Thai historiography I have had the opportunity to offset the preponderant view of official historiography by emphasizing the fact that, during its existence as an independent kingdom between the mid-13th century and 1558, Chiang Mai was a thriving Buddhist centre and the birth-place of tamnân historiography, and it seems to have bequeathed a literary tradition to the Siamese kingdom of Ayutthayâ too. Interestingly, tamnân histories are less reliable as a source for the history they purport to relate than as a form of history themselves. In them one can trace various cultural influences, Ceylonese as well as Lâo and Burman/Mọn, that came into play in the way a tamnân history was written. Methodologically, I approach the northern Thai tamnân not strictly from the chronological, but the thematic point of view. As Chiang Mai was a Theravada Buddhist state par excellence in its heyday, I also discuss the rôle of tamnân historiography in the religious dispute within the Chiang Mai saṅgha in the mid-15th century, a theme that recurred at Bangkok in the 1830s. It had a legitimizing overtone that merits a mention. I also deal with other aspects of tamnân historiography such as the tamnân (or Traiphûm) geography, whose implications are supposed to lead to a better understanding of the traditional Thai perception of the past.

The phongsâwadân was apparently Ayutthayâ's dominant mode of historical writing. Its subject matter centres around the kings and the royal family. Of the ten extant versions, only four date back to the Ayutthayâ period, and none before the late 15th century. There is a marked difference between the Ayutthayâ and Bangkok (post-1782) recensions. There is also a difficult problem of dating these recensions. The detailed phongsâwadân compiled in the first Bangkok reign (1782-1809) are known to be factually unreliable, but, as Nidhi Aeusrivongse has demonstrated in one of his recent works,[7] these chronicles reflect much of the attitude and history of the age in which they were written. The reader will see that, in collating the various phongsâwadân recensions, and establishing their true dates and verification, I concentrate on the following points: (1) narrative style, (2) chronological patterns, (3) legitimation issues, and (4) literary trends of the period.

The decline of traditional historiography in the nineteenth century can best be seen in the context of the intellectual development and the socio-political changes that took place after Siam had abandoned her isolationist policy in the reign of Râmâ III (1824-51). It was a gradual process, which has never been fully explained. I am concerned here not with the Western view of Siam, but primarily with the popular Siamese view of and attitude towards the West. In relating Siamese reactions, I have drawn heavily on certain literary works which represent most truly the spirit of the period.

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7) Nidhi Aeusrivongse, Prawattisât Rattanakôsin Nai Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ, "Bangkok History in Ayudhya Chronicles", Bangkok: Bannakit Press, 1981.

The passing of the traditional world-view was the beginning of the decline of tamnân and phongsâwadân historiography in the reign of King Mongkut (1851-68), at the time when the Siamese ruling class had turned to the West for inspiration. It was in the fifth reign that the impact of the West, both directly and indirectly, made itself felt in Siam in the field of political and historical writings. Two commoners, Thianwan and K.S.R. Kulâp, were the most important writers outside the princely class, and their works, suppressed by official historiography, are worth discussing. My argument will be against the conventional view that, intellectually, nothing at all happened under the old régime, and anything radical had to come with the June 1932 Revolution.

The final section of this thesis is devoted to describing how the pressure of Western imperialism, the modernization of Siam, and the development of 'national' consciousness in the reign of King Chulâlongkọn gave birth to a national historiography, and how these factors undermined the need for traditional historiography.

The Sources

Most of the primary sources referred to in this study are published materials, covering the period from around the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries. The Prachum Silâčhârúk, "Corpus of the Inscriptions of Thailand", vol. 1-6, provide the essential epigraphic information. The texts of recently-found inscriptions of the North have been published in the Sinlapâkọn journal. The Prachum Phongsâwadân, "Collected Chronicles", series, despite its shortcomings, is a most important source of early Thai history. In describing tamnân

historiography, and unfolding the history of the North, I have found two sources particularly useful: Sa-gnuan Chôtisukharat's Prachum Tamnân Lân-Nâ Thai, "Collection of Historical Documents Relating to Lân-Nâ Thai" (1976), 2 vols, and University of Chiang Mai publications on Lân-Nâ Thai studies, which contain transcriptions of new Tai Yuan manuscripts. Apart from these sources, I use all the standard Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ, "Dynastic Chronicles of Ayutthayâ", and relevant literary works. Most of them are to be found in the National Library, Bangkok, and the library of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London University.

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I am particularly grateful to the late Peter Bee of the School of Oriental and African Studies, with whom I spent hours dicussing the historical value of Thai literature, and who, together with Dr. J.H.C.S. Davidson, his colleague, came

to my rescue, when I had doubts about the Chinese records.

I am also indebted to Dr. M. Vickery, University of Adelaide, who read an earlier draft of Chapter I and made valuable comments and criticisms, but I am responsible for the final interpretations and any mistakes arising out of them. I am grateful to Dr. Patricia Mercer for her help in reading the final draft of this thesis.

Finally, my thanks go to my wife, Nittayâ, who typed the greater part of the thesis, and whose moral support has prevented me giving up the whole project out of frustration.

Note on the transcription of Thai words

Transcribing Thai words into an English form has always been an irksome problem. Scholars choose either the phonetic transcription, which makes Thai words sound more like they naturally do, but still cannot cope with Thai tones, or the graphic transliteration, which is much more complicated than the phonetic system, but which is more recognizable when rendered back into Thai. The difficulty involving these two systems can best be demonstrated by these instances:

Graphic	Phonetic
Savarrgalōk	Sawankhalôk
Vajirāvudh	Wachirâwut
Ayudhyā	Ayutthayâ
Sukhodaya	Sukhôthai

Writing a thesis related to modern times I see the advantage of adhering to the phonetic transcription for most Thai words, but without tonal marks for convenience's sake. However, it is almost imperative that in certain cases words derived from Pali and Sanskrit should also be given in the graphic form, for example, Jinakālamālī, Dvāravatī, and Culayuddhakāravamsa. As some Thai vowels and dipthongs have no equivalents in the English language, these are the transcription forms of some of them:

ú = ◌ุ ; ū = ◌ู ; úa = ◌ุ◌ะ ;
ua = ◌ั◌ว ; û'a = เ◌ั◌ว

In other cases, the pronunciation of some Thai

words follows this guide:

k	=	get	kh	=	cat, king
čh	=	judge	ch	=	chain
t	=	unaspirated: stop	th	=	aspirated: tea
p	=	unaspirated: spin	ph	=	aspirated: pain

ǫ = saw, border

é = né (in French), gay

è = père (in French), pair

ˆ = used to indicate lengthened vowels in Thai such as â = far; î = been; ô = oat; and û = pool

¯ = used to indicate lengthened vowels in Pali and Sanskrit such as Cāmadevīvamsa

ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Artibus Asiae
BARL	Bulletin des Amis du Royaume Lao
BEFEO	Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient
CAS	Contributions to Asian Studies
CHM	Cahiers d'histoire mondiale
FA	France-Asie
JA	Journal Asiatique
JAS	Journal of Asian Studies
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society
JBRS	Journal of the Burma Research Society
JMBRAS	Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society
JRASB	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal
JRASGB	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
JSEAH	Journal of Southeast Asian History
JSEAS	Jouranl of Southeast Asian Studies
JESHO	Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient
JSS	Journal of the Siam Society
KTS	Kotmâi Trâ Sâmduang
LP/1680	Luang Prasert Recension of the Annals of Ayutthayâ
NB	Nithân Bôrânnakhadî
PP	Prachum Phongsâwadân
PSČ	Prachum Silâčhârúk
PTLT	Prachum Tamnân Lân-Nâ Thai
SP	(Wârasân) Sinlapâkǫn
TP	T'oung Pao
WM	Wârasân Manutsayasât (Chiang Mai)
WT	Warasân Thammasât

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PART ONE

TRADITIONAL THAI HISTORIOGRAPHY

Introduction

Chapter I

Tamnân: Buddhist Myths and History

Chapter II

Phongsâwadân: Dynastic Chronicles

INTRODUCTION

Sources of Thai history prior to the foundation of Bangkok in 1782 fall into two main categories: (1) Chinese and European accounts and (2) indigenous sources of diverse kinds. Before the advent of Europeans around the beginning of the sixteenth century A.D., the "Tai" states had long been in contact with China which was the dominant power in Eastern Asia. During the Yuan (Mongol) and early Ming dynasties, the Chinese had a political interest in the countries of South-East Asia, the Yuan with intent to realize the true submission of the rulers of these countries, and the Ming attempting to bring the "barbarian" states back into traditional Chinese world order, which was crucial to the legitimacy of the new dynasty. The Yuan Shih, "History of the Yuan Dynasty", and the Ming Shih, "History of the Ming Dynasty", are of great value as they record the tribute-bearing missions sent by the kings of Sukhôthai and Ayutthayâ to the Celestial Court. The purpose of these missions was more often than not to request permission to trade at Canton and on certain occasions to request investiture of a new king, which came in the form of a seal of approval and conferred title. Towards the end of the Yuan dynasty, in the mid-fourteenth century, Wang Ta-yuan, a Chinese traveller, visited the lower Mènâm basin, and later wrote a contemporary account.[1] Another Chinese eye-witness account was written by Ma Huan, who had accompanied the Grand Eunuch

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1) P. Pelliot, "Deux itinéraires de chine en inde à la fin du viii^{e} siècle", BEFEO, 4, 1/2 (Jan.-avr. 1904): 255

Cheng Ho to Ayutthayâ in 1408.[2] Chinese historiographers were renowned for their conscentiousness and accuracy[3] but their works are marred by their parochial Confucian viewpoint. The most fundamental problem is how to restore original Tai names correctly from the Chinese characters.

Most of the European accounts are generally reliable. Many of them, however, are too dramatized or colourful to be true. Some of the Europeans who claimed to have visited Ayutthayâ may not have been there at all.[4] Despite this, some early European visitors to the Siamese capital have left invaluable information indispensable to the reconstruction of the history of Ayutthayâ. Without Peter Floris' contemporary account, for instance, we could not be sure that King Songtham came to the throne in 1610 as indicated by the Saṅgītiyavaṃsa, a much discredited religious chronicle of the early Bangkok

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2) Ma Huan, Ying-yai sheng-lan, "The Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores", translated from the Chinese text edited by Feng Ch'eng-chün with introduction, notes and appendices by J.V.G. Mills, Cambridge University Press, 1970: 102-7

3) See: Homer H. Dubs, "The Reliability of Chinese Histories", The Far Eastern Quarterly (FEQ), 6, 1 (Nov. 1946): 23-43

4) There are a number of contemporary accounts of Siam written by Portuguese adventurers. Amongst these writers are Varthema, Pigafetta, Castanheda, Albuquerque, Fedrici, Balbi, and others. Varthema, Pinto, and Fitch are probably the only ones who set foot on Siamese territory. (Donald F. Lach, Southeast Asia in the Eyes of Europe, Chicago: Phoenix Books, 1968: 522)

One of the most well-known accounts of C16th Siam is that by Fernao Mendez Pinto who claimed to have been in Siam during the reign of Phra Chaiyarâchâ (1533-46) and accompanied his army in the campaign against Chiang Mai in 1545. (H. Cogan, (tr.), The Voyages and Adventures of Fernand Mendez Pinto, London, 1963: 261-77) Historians are divided into two camps. According to Professor Hall, "His account seems to be a hotch-potch of stories picked up probably from Portuguese soldiers-of-fortune who had served in the Siamese army." (A History of South-East Asia, 4th edition, Macmillan Asian Histories Series, 1981: 270, 286-7) Yet, what Pinto said cannot be dismissed quite lightly. See M. Vickery, Cambodia After Angkor, Ph.D. Thesis, Yale University, 1977: Ch. 8

period, whereas all other extant dynastic chronicles give 1602 as the date of his succession.[5] The most remarkable among European writers was undoubtedly Jeremias van Vliet, assistant to the Dutch factor, and later the man in charge of Dutch interests in Ayutthayâ between 1638 and 1641. Jeremias van Vliet's writings on Ayutthayâ are of great historical value, because he had resided in Siam long enough to be familiar with not only the Siamese language but also Siamese way of life and customs. His most interesting work, The Short History of the Kings of Siam, was written towards the end of his stay in Siam; in it, van Vliet has preserved a chronicular tradition, which is essential to our understanding of the Siamese perception of the past. Simon de la Loubère, Louis XIV's envoy plenipotentiary to the court of King Nârâi (1656-88) in 1687/8, also wrote an excellent account of Siam, describing all aspects of Siam and Siamese way of life. Like van Vliet's principal works, The Kingdom of Siam by Simon de la Loubère is of immense value.

But however important Chinese and European sources are, they must be considered supplementary to Thai primary sources such as inscriptions and early dated documents. In connection with traditional Thai historiography one can perhaps discuss in brief here four main categories of Thai sources: (1) epigraphy; (2) law codes; (3) tamnân or religious chronicles;

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5) W.H. Moreland, Peter Floris: His Voyage to the East Indies in the Globe, 1611-1615, London: Hakluyte Society, 1934: 55-8; G. Coedès, "Une recension palie des annales d' Ayudhya", BEFEO, 14, 3 (1914): 23; For chronology and list of kings of Ayutthayâ see Appendix III.B

and (4) phongsâwadân or dynastic chronicles.

Epigraphy

Inscriptions are for the most part a very reliable source of early Thai history, but not all unearthed in present-day Thailand are of Tai origin. In 1924, George Coedès, then Chief Conservator of the Wachirayân National Library, reported that by then 212 inscriptions had been discovered in Siam.[6] Since that time, the Commission for the Publication of Historical Documents has collected a further number of inscriptions from all over the country. According to Dr. Prasert ṇa Nagara, the most respected Thai epigraphist, there are now 481 inscriptions, 284 of which have been deciphered by epigraphists and published in the six volumes of the Prachum Silâčhârúk, "Corpus of the Inscriptions of Thailand", between 1924 and 1973.[7]

These inscriptions are found on various types of objects such as limestone stèle, bronze plaques and bricks. They are written in Mṇn, Khmer, Tai Yuan, Siamese, and South Indian scripts. Many of these inscriptions are bilingual; some have a combination of Pali and Khmer, others Sanskrit and Khmer. It is worth noting that of the 481 inscriptions only 85 can be attributed to the Tai period between Sukhôthai and Bangkok; Sukhôthai alone claims 26 inscriptions, Phingkharat Chiang Mai (the northern so-called "Lân-Nâ Thai" kingdom) has seven, and Ayutthayâ eight, that cover the period between the middle of

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6) Prachum Silâčhârúk Phâk Thî 1, "Corpus of the Inscriptions of Thailand), hereafter cited PSč/I: 1

7) Historical Commission, Thailand, "Banthúk Kân Sadèng Pâthakathâ Khṇng Khana Kammakân Chamra Prawattisât Thai Rû'ang Silâčhârúk" (Report on the Seminar of the Historical Commission Concerning the Inscriptions of Thailand), Thalèngngân Prawattisât Ekkasân Bôrânnakhadî (TPEB), 13, 1 (Jan.-Jun. 1979): 2

the fourteenth century and the end of the seventeenth century. For the first period of Thai history up to c. 1500, the 41 inscriptions of Sukhôthai, Phingkharat Chiang Mai, and Ayutthayâ are of particular value. The reading of a number of these inscriptions, however, is sometimes very problematic due to damage to the stones and lacunae in many phrases.

It is remarkable that in the early days of Ayutthayâ (C14th-16th), the official language used in the Ayutthayan inscriptions was by no means Siamese, but Khmer. A leading historian argues convincingly on the basis of data available that the Cambodian language and alphabet retained their prestige in Siam at least up to 1562, the date of the Dânsâi inscription, even when the Thai language was used.[8] This strange anomaly can only be explained partially in terms of the persistence of Khmer culture, and probably the survival of a large percentage of Khmer and Mon population.[9] It appears that after the Tai chiefs of Upper Siam had succeeded in expelling the Khmer from their military outposts at Sukhôthai and Sîsatchanâlai, during the reign of Râmkhamhèng there existed a strong urge to assert Tai identity, and thus he devised the Siamese script from the current Mon and cursive Khmer scripts. This first Siamese script was, however, used only once in the Râmkhamhèng inscription of 1292. Its uniqueness lies in the arrangement

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8) M. Vickery, "The Khmer Inscriptions of Tenasserim: A Reinterpretation", JSS, 61, 1 (Jan. 1973): 51-70

9) A.B. Griswold & Prasert na Nagara, "On Kingship and Society at Sukhodaya" in G.W. Skinner & Thomas Kirsch, (eds), Change and Persistence in Thai Society, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975: 34

of the consonants and vowels along the same line in the manner of the occidental languages. This has always been seen as Râmkhamhèng's attempt to play down the dominating influence of Khmer culture.[10] It is not unlikely that from the time of Sukhôthai, the racial term "Tai" had already acquired a new meaning of "Free", signifying the status of the Tai in Upper Siam.[11]

Soon after Râmkhamhèng's death, the use of his new script became less popular. There was a relapse to the Khmer norm; the use of Khmer in subsequent Sukhôthai inscriptions, and the borrowing of grandiloquent Khmer titles became evident, especially in the reign of Lithai (1347-68?). The return to Khmer epigraphic tradition in Upper Siam reflects the fact that the Tai were probably the ruling minority, and the impact of Khmer culture at both the court and local levels was still very strong. With the rise of Ayutthayâ in the middle of the fourteenth century, it is even less surprising to see that many of Ayutthayan inscriptions were engraved in provincial Khmer script, considering that Angkor had once ruled central Thailand on and off for nearly three centuries prior to its own decline in the late thirteenth century.

Besides the original part of the Râmkhamhèng inscription of 1292, which contains a panegyric in praise of the deeds of

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10) J. Burnay and G. Coedès, "The Origins of the Sukhodaya Script", JSS, 21 (1928): 87; For a nationalistic interpretation see: Wičhitwâthakân, Luang, "Watthanatham Sukhôthai" (Sukhôthai Culture) in Sukhôthai Province, Nangsư Anusọn Phọ-khun Râmkhamhèng, "In Commemoration of King Râmkhamhèng", Bangkok; 1970: 5, 10

11) At least in the seventeenth century, the Siamese believed that "Tai" or "Thai" meaned "Free". See Simon de la Loubère, The Kingdom of Siam, tr. A.T. Gen. R.S.S., Oxford in Asia Historical Reprints, Kuala Lumpur, 1969: 6

the king himself, almost all the inscriptions were set up to commemorate religious events such as the establishment of a new Buddhist sanctuary, reliquary or shrine, and the granting of religious lands and properties.[12] A few stone inscriptions were erected to publicize pacts of friendship between rulers of two Tai principalities.[13] An inscription dated probably in 1397[14] was erected by a king of Sukhôthai, and contains, interestingly, the lengthy text of a penal code of the kingdom.[15]

The inscriptions of Phingkharat Chiang Mai were written in the Tai Yuan language and script. But the oldest inscription of this Tai kingdom, which is dated 1370 A.D. and found at Wat Phra Yün, Lamphûn, was inscribed with the Sukhôthai script, introduced there by Phra Sumanathera, a monk from Sukhôthai, who had brought Râmanya Buddhism to Chiang Mai in the previous year. Most of the inscriptions in and around the Chiang Mai area were erected for the purpose of registering gifts and land grants to the saṅgha. In most cases, the inscriptions would cite the donations of temple slaves (khâ-phra or khâ-wat) by the town magnates or kings for the upkeep of the wat (monastery). The donor(s) would customarily put

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12) Prasert na Nagara, "Wiwatthanâkân Wannakam Samai Sukhôthai" (The Evolution of Sukhôthai Literature) in Chomrom Wannasin, Kasetsât University, Wiwatthanâkân Khong Wannakam Thai, "The Evolution of Thai Literature), Bangkok, 1974: 11

13) See, for example, PSč/III: No. 40, pp 44-6; No. 45, pp. 62-7; Louis Finot, "Notes d'épigraphie XIV, les inscriptions du musée de Hanoi", BEFEO, 15, 2 (1915): 28-36 "Stèle de Dansai"; Cf. Prasân Bunprakhong, "Kham-ân Silâ-châruk Akson Thai Nû'a Phâsâ Thai" (The Deciphering of an Inscription in Northern Thai Script), SP, 13, 1 (May 1979) : 61-6

14) According to M. Vickery (Guide: 230)

15) PSč/III: No. 38, pp. 26-36

a hair-raising curse upon those who blatantly dared to expropriate what had already been given for the benefit of the Religion. A brief history of the particular wat or phrathât (reliquary) was sometimes told. It is evident that at times, this brief history was reproduced by later Buddhist monks who wrote the tamnân (religious chronicles) on the bailân, "folding palm-leaves", which were more convenient but less long-lasting than the stone. But the reverse of this process is not unknown.[16] The epigraphic tradition of Chiang Mai continued until the beginning of the nineteenth century, but its popularity had already long declined by that time.

The Law Codes

One of the lesser known aspects of ancient Tai history is the evolution of codified laws before the first Bangkok reign. As with the other facets of Thai history, a great deal of emphasis has been placed on Sukhôthai and Ayutthayâ where the derivation and explanation of traditional Tai laws are concerned. The excellent works in this field by R. Lingat pertaining to the codification of Siamese laws in 1805 are reminiscent of the conservative views of early Thai history during the first half of the twentieth century. Lingat points out two sources of traditional Tai laws: the Manû Thammasât (or the Buddhist version of the ancient Hindu "Law of Manu) and the Râtchasât or Râtcha-Anâčhak (lit., "Science of a King" and "Cycles of Royal Commands", respectively); the former being the basic principle which was immutable, and the latter

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16) The inscription of Dânsâi (II), now preserved at Wat Phrathât Sîsongrak, Loei, was erected and dated in the Christian Era (A.D. 1906), after the inscription of Dânsâi (I) had been removed to Hanoi. The text of Dânsâi (II) is slightly different from that of Dânsâi (I) because the engraver followed the wat's palm-leaf manuscript.

the actual royal decrees thereafter compiled and made into permanent laws.[17] The concept of law, which was based on the Manû Thammasât, is thought to have been passed on to the Siamese via the Mon of Lower Burma. It is obvious that the people of Chiang Mai had used another set of laws also influenced by the Mon Manû Thammasât. There is yet to appear a study of whether some proto-Tai social conditions did exist, especially before the administrative reform of King Boromma-trailôk (1448-88). As a source of Thai history, the laws can be said to belong to two traditions.

(1) Siamese Laws

It appears that following the Burmese sack of Ayutthayâ in 1767, the laws of the kingdom became scattered all over the place. Until the recodification of Siamese laws in 1805, the loss of some important laws had opened the way for judges to abuse their authority. The collection of old laws in 1805 was prompted by a complaint to the king that the irregularity in the then existing legal proceedings had prejudiced the course of justice.[18] As a result, Râmâ I ordered that the old laws be collected and standardized so that they could be used and referred to in the court of justice. Every authentic law was stamped with three seals: the Râtchasî (Lion), the Khotchasî (Elephantine-lion), and the Búa-Kèw (Lotus), which were the traditional seals of the Minister of the North, the Minister of the South, and the Treasurer of the Kingdom res-

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17) A.B. Griswold and Prasert na Nagara, "Epigraphic and Historical Studies, No. 17: The Judgments of King Man Ray", JSS, 65, 1 (Jan. 1977) 146fn.3

18) Fine Arts Department, Bangkok, Rû'ang Kotmâi Trâ Sâmduang, (KTS), "History of the Laws of Three Seals", 1978: 1

pectively. Hence the codified laws of Siam came to be known as Kotmâi Trâ Sâmduang, "Laws of Three Seals".

All of the laws collected date from Ayutthayan times; those dated in the Buddhist Era fall in Râmâthibọdî I's reign (1351-68). Many are dated in the so-called "Chunlamanî" Era, others in the Chunla "Lesser" Era. It is obvious, whenever the era date does not correspond with the animal year, that the court scholars have emended the date of a law in accordance with the Chât chronicular tradition.[19)]

KTS was partially published in 1849 by Môt Amâttayakun, who incurred Râmâ III's displeasure for publicizing documents from the Royal Archives. It was first published in full in 1873 by the printing firm of Dan Beach Bradley, the American missionaries.[20)]

(2) Chiang Mai Laws

During the last decade some attention has been paid to another tradition of Tai laws, which had originated in the Chiang Mai area, and was thought to have been the work of King Mangrâi. This law code is usually referred to as the Mangrâiyasât, "Mangrâi's Law Code", or Mangrâiyawinichai, "Judgements of King Mangrâi". In a recent survey of palm-leaf manuscripts kept in the wat (monasteries) of the former Chiang Mai kingdom, 88 texts of the Mangrâiyasât were discovered.[21)]

But among the Chiang Mai laws, four slightly different ver-

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19) See these laws in particular, KTS: Law of Treason dated C.S. 796, Tiger Year (= A.D. 1434), p. 529; Law of Treason dated C.S. 955, Tiger Year (= 1593), p. 540. Both are wrong because the C.S. dates do not correspond with the animal years. See also Chät chronology (Appendix III)

20) KTS: "Preface": (3)

21) Sommâi Premčhit, "Palm Leaf Manuscripts and Traditional Sermon" in Sèng Chanthara-ngâm and Narúchon Itthičhirâčharat, (eds), Buddhism in Northern Thailand, Chiang Mai: World Fellowship of Buddhists, 1980: 83

sions merit a mention here.

(1) The Mangrâiyawinichai (Wat Sao Hai version) was discovered by Mr. Kraisî Nimmânhémin in Saraburî province, central Thailand, in 1953. The manuscript of this version is now kept in the Library of the Siam Society at Bangkok. Copied from an older document by a monk called Thâwọn at Lopburî in 1800, at the request of a certain Nọi Khamphî, it consists of 48 palm-leaves written in Tai Yuan, the dialect of Chiang Mai. It has been translated first into standard Thai,[22] and later into English.[23]

(2) The Mangrâiyasât, whose original manuscript belonged to M. Camille Notton, former French Consul at Chiang Mai, was destroyed during the Second World War, but a copy of it had been made by Mr. Kraisî in 1939. Part of it has been translated into standard Thai by Sa-nguan Chôtisukharat since 1966.[24]

(3) The Mangrâiyasât (Wat Chiang Man version) is said tc belong to Wat Chiang Man, Chiang Mai. It has not yet been published.[25]

(4) The Kotmâi Mangrâi, "The Law of King Mangrâi", was presented by Mr. Sak Rattanachai to the National Library in 1976. Written in Tai Yuan on 36 palm-leaves, this law code was found belonging to a Tai Yuan family from Chiang Sèn that had settled down in Lampâng province. Another copy of this legal document was done on samut-khoi (palm-leaves bound in book form) by an official named Sèn Téchawachira-akson in

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22) Prasert na Nagara, Mangrâiyawinichai, translated from Tai Yuan into modern Thai, Bangkok, 1971

23) Griswold & Prasert, op.cit.: 147-60

24) Sa-nguan Chôtisukharat, Thai Yuan Khon Mû'ang, Bangkok: Odeon Store, 1966

25) Griswold & Prasert, op.cit.: 143-45

1806. It has recently been translated into standard Thai.[26]

The preamble of all these variations states that Mangrâi was the law giver of Chiang Mai. Even if the claim is true, one must suspect that the extant versions have undergone several revisions because they show signs of amendments and accretions, and very probably, later articles were added only in the late eighteenth century.[27] It is possible that the early articles may have been formulated in Mangrâi's time, but there is some evidence that at least the Notton version was based on an older text compiled in the reign of Phra Mû'ang Kèw (1495-1525).

In contrast to the pomposity of the Ayutthayan KTS, the Mangrâiyasât has a direct narrative style which is plain and easily intelligible. Its articles and clauses are quite brief; and unlike the Ayutthayan laws, the Mangrâiyasât is more of a social contract than a criminal code. In this regard, one must mention a little known work entitled Khamsǫn Phrayâ Mangrâi, "Moral Preaching to King Mangrâi". This latter work is said in its opening paragraph to have been a sermon by a monk, Tissathera, Mangrâi's preceptor, and it was preached to the king so that he would rule his kingdom according to two principles: the Thammasât and the ancient customs.[28] The Khamsǫn is not a law but a commentary on the moral foundation of Mangrâi's laws which was binding upon the ruler as well as the subjects. "The Great Lord", says Tissathera, "who does not

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26) Sak Rattanachai, "Kotmâi Mangrâi Chabap Nâi Sak Rattanachai Mǫp Kè Hǫ Samut Hèng Chât" (The Code of King Mangrâi, a Version Presented to the National Library by Nâi Sak Rattanachai), SP, 22, 4 (Nov. 1978): 73-85

27) Griswold & Prasert, op.cit.: 144

28) Tissathera, Phra, Khamsǫn Phrayâ Mangrâi, "Moral Preaching to King Mangrâi", Chiang Mai University, 1976: 14-5

judge and enjoin according to the Thammasât is doomed with sin".[29] The inferior people were taught not to look beyond their proper social status: "Those who are of low birth (phrai-nọi) ought not to strive to become a khun (nobleman)... Born not among the čhâo (princely class), do not be ambitious to become one. Born not of a nobleman, do not be ambitious to become one. Born not a couragous person, do not expect to become a leading officer (khun hân).."[30] The poetical metre used in the "Moral Preaching" is the ancient form of râi, similar to that used in other early Tai literary works, including the Râmkhamhèng inscription of 1292? and the Prakât Chèngnâm, "Oath on the Drinking of the Water of Allegiance" composed by an Ayutthayan poet in the second half of the fourteenth century.[31] But note also the similarity between the "Moral Preaching" and an Ayutthayan law.[32]

The differences in the various versions of the Laws of King Mangrâi were due to the process of recopying through many generations; perhaps it was learned by heart. The fact that the Laws was discovered in different parts of Thailand suggests (1) that it had evolved from the customs of the Tai Yuan, and

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29) ibid.: 14

30) ibid.: 21

31) The Oath is also called Lilit Ongkân Chèngnâm Phra Phiphat Sattayâ as it is written in the lilit format, i.e. a mixture of râi and khlông metres. Râi is perhaps the only known form of Siamese literature in the Sukhôthai period. The khlông metre used in the Oath has some peculiarities, not found in any other Siamese literary works, except the quasi-historical poem entitled Thâo Hung or Khun Chû'ang, written by a Lao poet, supposedly around the middle of the fourteenth century A.D. Chit Phûmisak was the first Thai scholar to identify the mysterious metre used in these two poems as Khlông Monthakakhati or commonly known as Khlông Hâ. See Thipakọn, (pseud. Chit Phûmisak), Bot Wikhọh Wannakam Yuk Sakdinâ, "A Critical Study on Siamese Literature of the "Sakdinâ" Period", Bangkok: Phikhanet, 1976: 131

32) Cf. KTS: Law on Thievery dated B.E. 1903, Pig Year, (= A.D. 1359), p. 433

wherever the Tai Yuan went it was used as a means of justice, and (2) that throughout their long direct rule of Chiang Mai, the Burmese did little to interfere with local customs, and the Siamese seem to have allowed the Chiang Mai war captives to apply their own laws in their communities in central Thailand.[33)]

The Tamnân

As a category of Tai historical writing, the tamnân was a sort of popular history as it originated in the wat, which, in the old days, was the hub of Tai cultural activities. The word "tamnân" derives its origin from Khmer damnāl, lit., "telling a story".[34)] To all intents and purposes, the tamnân were written in the same manner as the Burmese thamaing, the term used to describe the Buddhist historical tradition in that country. It is most likely that the Tai Yuan of Chiang Mai not only became Buddhist converts through the preponderant influence of Burman/Mon Buddhism in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but they were also recipients of Burman/Mon Buddhist historical tradition; especially the writing of religious chronicles. Of the nature of the "thamaing" literature of Burma, G.H. Luce says:

> The name is generally associated with the prose-history of a pagoda. But there are also thamaing on other subjects such as monasteries and towns. From the religious nature of their contents, thamaing may be said to be mainly devoted to objects which testify to the establishment of the religion. And as pagodas are the most fitting monuments which

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33) Griswold & Prasert, op.cit.: 143; See also KTS: clause 8 of the Law of Government and Administration, p. 79

34) I am indebted to Dr. M. Vickery for giving me this information.

> do this, each pagoda possesses a thamaing of its own. The thamaing of a pagoda (monastery or town) tells us all its history, legendary and authentic. Incidentally we learn something about the doings of a king, who is the donor of the pagoda, or about some political events with which the building of the pagoda is intimately connected.[35]

The above description of the Burmese thamaing applies equally clearly to the Tai tamnân for they belonged to the very same Buddhist historical tradition. In the wider context, the Tai tamnân (Burmese thamaing and Mon dhatuwan)[36] must be seen as a distinctive feature of Theravāda Buddhist culture, or an extension of Ceylonese (Sinhalese) Buddhist literature in South-East Asia. Although the writing of tamnân was until recently ubiquitous in all parts of Thailand, the best and earliest Tai tamnân come from the northern Lân-Nâ Thai region covering the eight provinces of Chiang Mai, Chiang Râi, Phayao, Mèhongson, Lamphûn, Lampâng, Phrè, and Nân. Despite the usual claims that a number of Tai tamnân are very ancient, we have reason to believe that the earliest of the extant copies date only from the second half of the fifteenth century. In cases where the original colophon of the work is lacking, it is almost impossible to determine the date of compilation of the tamnân in question. The problem of finding out the true date of a tamnân history arises from the fact that Theravāda monks, in performing religious rites, in matters concerning art and

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35) G.H. Luce and Pe Maung Tin, (trs), The Glass Palace Chronicle of the Kings of Burma, Oxford University Press, 1923: xxi

36) H.L. Shorto, "A Mon Genealogy of Kings: Observation on the Nidāna Arambhakathā" in D.G.E. Hall, (ed.), Historians of South-East Asia, London: Oxford University Press, 1961: 63

architecture, and in literature, would vie with each other for first place in adhering to orthodoxy.[37] In composing a Pali text, such the religious tamnân, they would take great pride in faithfully reproducing it in the form and style approved by the ancient masters of Pali literature. In sum, a tamnân history written at the beginning of the nineteenth century could look very much like one written several hundred years before.

Of all the sources of ancient Thai history, tamnân can be said to have the most complicated nature as they incorporate into the rigid Buddhist chronological framework Buddhist myths, local traditions, and actual history. There is no doubt that the Thai perception of the past has been influenced by this type of historical writing far more than anything else. But failing to understand the foreign elements in tamnân history can easily lead one to misinterpret early Thai history. It is my intention to unravel the intricacies of tamnân history by approaching from a thematic point of view and identifying elements that make up a certain work.

The Phongsâwadân

The most well-known and perhaps overrated source for Thai history are the phongsâwadân. The word phongsâwadân is derived from two Sanskritic elements: baṁśa, meaning "family" or "genealogy" and avatār, meaning "reincarnation of God Vishnu". Hence, a phongsâwadân history, as a type of historical genre, is a genealogy of kings; kings, in Siamese think-

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37) For a good discussion on this aspect of Buddhist literature see: Mabel Haynes Bode, A Burmese Historian of Buddhism, London: Unwin Brothers, 1898: 64

ing, being human manifestations of God Vishnu.

Whereas the tamnân was the dominant mode of historical writing in Lân-Nâ Thai during the golden age of Pali literature in that kingdom which lasted between 1441 and 1558, the phongsâwadân type has to be associated with the Ayutthayan polity. The basic difference between the tamnân type and the phongsâwadân type is that the former was written to serve religious purposes, i.e. to preach Buddha's Dhamma, "Immutable Law", by historical examples, while the later was written for the purpose of sanctifying the Ayutthayan kingship. One cannot fail to observe other differences such as the prominent part played by monks at the court of the Chiang Mai king, and Brahman priests at the Siamese court. Furthermore, as an anthropologist has pointed out, Chiang Mai had a Pali culture whereas the Siamese had a Sanskrit culture.[38] This is clearly reflected in the literary works of Chiang Mai which are full of Pali words and those of Ayutthayâ which are Sanskrit-oriented. The distinction was, of course, less marked in the late Ayutthayâ period than before because, by the seventeenth century, the Pali literature of Chiang Mai had already become influential at Ayutthayâ.[39]

The origin of the phongsâwadân is barely known, and while purposing the idea that it was a category predominantly identifiable with Ayutthayâ, it does not necessarily mean that phongsâwadân were not written in Lân-Nâ Thai; rather they were known under a different name, râtchawongpakon, and

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38) Richard David, Muang Metaphysics: A Study in Northern Thai Myth and Ritual, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Sydney, 1974: 25

39) P. Schweisguth, Etude sur la littérature siamoise, Paris: Imprémarie nationale, 1952: 125-6

still took second place in the Chiang Mai tradition. It is unlikely that the phongsâwadân writing was of Khmer origin owing to the fact that most Cambodian chronicles are late compilations and Siamese-influenced. Until recently, it was generally believed that the first Siamese phongsâwadân was the Luang Prasert Chronicle (LP/1680) dating from 1680, despite the fact that it is stated clearly in its preamble that it had been compiled from three kinds of official documents one of which was an earlier phongsâwadân.[40] In 1971, the existence of an earlier phongsâwadân than LP/1680 was finally confirmed by Michael Vickery's discovery of the 2/k.125 Fragment which, unlike the abridged LP/1680, is a detailed chronicle of Ayutthayâ. The extant text was apparently a late Ayutthayâ copy, but internal evidence, especially the details concerning titles and ranks, suggests that the original text of the 2/k.125 Fragment was written before Bǫrommatrailôk's administrative reform in the second half of the fifteenth century, or otherwise not long after it.[41] And it is not impossible that it might have formed part of the unabridged LP/1680. However, the significance of an earlier date refutes Prince Damrong's long-held theory that detailed chronicles were beginning to be written only from the reign of Bǫrommakôt (1733-58)

It would be too speculative a matter for us to seek the historical genesis of the phongsâwadân without realizing that it was actually an aspect of the Indianizing process of South-East Asia. In the Indianized states of South-East Asia, like

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40) See Chapter II of this thesis, pp. 184-6
41) M. Vickery, "2/k.125 Fragment, A lost Chronicle of Ayutthayâ", JSS, 65, 1 (Jan. 1977): 54

in India itself, an essential element of the royal household was the bards who sang the ruler's panegyrics and those of his ancestors, by which they strengthened his power to perform his royal duties.[42] It was believed that the contents of the panegyrics "have the effect of a magical performance, causing the exploits described to spread their inherent power and to become active again in the person of the listener".[43] It was then necessary for a king to have special functionaries to be in charge of the royal genealogy. And, according to Kautilya's Arthaśastra, the king should listen to "traditional history" in order to enrich his wisdom.[44] With the presence of Brahman officiators at the Siamese court, it is reasonable to think that the phongsâwadân were conceived in the same fashion.

Historically, it was perhaps from the Mon, prolific writers of dynastic chronicles, that the phongsâwadân tradition was transmitted to the Siamese as well as the Tai Yuan. The The râtchawongpakon of Chiang Mai was a modified version of the Mon rājawaṅ (râtchawong in Thai), "Genealogies of Kings",[45] a type of historical writing which seems to have been peculiar to the Mon in Lower Burma and the old Mon kingdom of Hariphunchai. Narrating the story of Queen Châmmathéwî, founder of Hariphunchai, Phra Rattanapanyâ, author of the famous Jinakālamālī, cited "La Chronique Royale de Hariphunchai"[46] as his chief source of information. This could mean nothing else than a Mon rājawaṅ. The adoption of Mon historical tradition

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42) J. Gonda, "Ancient Indian Kingship From the Religious Point of View", Numen, 3, 2 (Apr. 1956): 131
43) ibid.
44) ibid.: 132
45) Shorto, op.cit.: 63
46) Coedès, "Documents": 73

at Ayutthayâ is also apparent. The greatness of the ancient Mọn kingdom of Dvaravati (c. C7th-11th) in the lower Mènâm basin lived on in the memory of the Ayutthayan people, who were probably predominantly of Mọn blood, although that highly Indianized state had ceased to exist two centuries previously. The name of the Siamese capital is given in an early 17th-century document as Dvāravatī Sī Ayutthayâ;[47] the Mọn element was preserved inexplicably also by later Siamese compilers of the phongsâwadân, who seem to have known nothing of that ancient Mọn kingdom. The existence of Dvāravatī, which is mentioned in some Chinese records, was only confirmed by the discovery of two ancient Mọn silver plaques in 1963.[48]

If the Mọn rājawaṅ, one of the oldest historical traditions of South-East Asia, provided the Siamese with the basic form of chronicular writing, it was nonetheless the divine kingship that kindled its spirit. In the past, historians talked of the Siamese kingship as a manifestation of the Khmer concept of the Devarāja cult.[49] Interestingly, the word Devarāja appears only in the Sdok Kak Thom inscription of 1052. Coedès translated it directly as "God-King" and associated the Devarāja cult with the solemn installation by Jayavarman II early in the nith century A.D. of a sacred liṅga on Mount Phnom Kulen. On this occasion the Cambodian

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47) Khačhọn Sukhaphânit, "Nangsư Phrarâtchasân Akṣọn Thai Phâsâ Thai Samai Ayutthayâ", (A Royal Missive of the Ayutthayâ Period), SP, 4, 3 (Sep. 1960): 48

48) G. Coedès, "Les Môns de Dvaravati" in Ba Shin et al, (eds), Essays Offered to G.H. Luce, vol. I, Ascona, 1966: 114

49) H.G.Q. Wales, Siamese State Ceremonies, London, 1931: 60; Dhani Nivat, Prince, "The Old Siamese Conception of the Monarchy", JSS, 36, 2 (Dec. 1947): 102; and G. Coedès, The Making of Southeast Asia, London, 1967: 146

king declared the Khmer independent of Javanese domination. The cult was believed to have involved the communion between the king and a god through the mediation of a Brahman priest. As such, it was generally believed that once the linga had been consecrated and the king's inner-self transferred to it, he became divinized.[50] Jean Filliozat, however, opened a new debate in 1966 by pointing out that the Khmer version of term Devarāja, "Kamrateñ jagat ta rāja", in conformity with the South Indian parallels, did not indicate that the Khmer king was "God-King". The Khmer expression "Kamrateñ jagat ta rāja" means simply "the Lord of the World, Who is King", i.e. God Śiva, not "Who is the (Khmer) King".[51] Jean Filliozat's re-interpretation of the word Devarāja has had the support of modern historians.[52] In his recent study of the Devarāja cult, Hermann Kulke, basing his analysis of Khmer inscriptions on Filliozat's hypothesis, is able to identify the Devarāja cult with a cult object, "Calantī Pratimā", a movable image of God Siva.[53] The worshipping of the Devarāja image was probably central in the legitimation process of the kings of Angkor, but by the twelfth century, the Devarāja cult had already been downgraded in the state ceremonies, initially as a result of the revival of Vaiṣṇavism in the reign of King Suryavarman II (c. 1113-50), and later as a result of Jayavarman VII's adoption of the esoteric Mahāyāna Buddhist Lokeśvara

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50) See G. Coedès, Angkor: An Introduction, tr. & ed. Emily Floyd Gardiner, Oxford University Press, 1963: Ch. 3

51) Jean Filliozat, "New Researches on the Relations between India and Cambodia", Indica, 3, 2 (Sep. 1966): 95-106

52) Hubert de Mistier du Bourg, "A propos du culte du Dieu-Roi (Devaraja) au Cambodge", CHM, 11, 3 (1968): 499-516; M. Vickery, "The Reign of Suryavarman I and the Dynamics of Angkorean Devevelopment", Paper presented to the Conference of the Association of the Historians of Asia, Kuala Lumpur, 1980

cult. But the implication of modern researches has led to a concensus among scholars that the Khmer did not worship their kings as god, but for a king, the Devarāja (and later the liṅga) cult was seen as the source of legitimacy and sovereignty. The Devarāja, representing Siva, "Lord of the World", was considered protector of "Kamrateñ phdai karom" (Lord of the Lower Plane/Earth), i.e. human king.[54]

It is likely that early Ayutthayan kings had been influenced by the Khmer concept of divine kingship, and retained its Hinduistic and Mahāyānist aspects, but essentially Ayutthayâ emerged as a Theravāda state. There is no doubt that the Siamese regarded their king as "God-King", as he was referred to in the old laws and the phongsâwadân as Phra Phû Pen Chão, "Lord who is God". One can talk of the duality of Hindu and Buddhist elements that provides the ideological basis for the Siamese "divine" kingship. In the Buddhist fashion, the king was elevated to the status of Sammutideva, "a deva (God) by common consent".[55] This idea came originally from the Buddhist cosmogony in which the early divine inhabitants of the earth are said to have degenerated and lost their divinity, and have agreed to elect the most virtuous person among them as divine king. He was to be the owner of the lands and obtain the sixth part of the crops.[56] Thus came the royal designation in Siamese "Phračhâo Phèndin" (Lord of the Lands).

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53) Hermann Kulke, The Devarāja Cult, Data Paper No. 108, Southeast Asian Program, Department of Asian Studies, Cornell University, 1978

54) ibid.: 23

55) Gonda, op.cit.: 155

56) ibid.

It was in accordance with this Buddhist principle that the Siamese kings defined his divine rights. An Ayutthayan law says:-

> Above all, all the lands belong to His Majesty. Because His Majesty is Sammutideva, "God by Consent", he can demote a high-ranking official or promote a humble one. If His Majesty commands anyone to do anything, his royal command has the force of God Indra's bolt that can cut through trees and mountains and destroy them.57)

Also, in the Ayutthayan kingship, one can identify the Hindu and Mahāyānist Buddhist magical aspects of the God-King cult; kings were living gods of the Hindu mythology, but they were also incipient Buddhas. In the first place, the Rāmayana, the great India epic, was always the most important court play, and together with the Mahābharata, it provided the Siamese kingship with a Vaiṣṇavite outlook. Ayutthayâ (Ayodhyā), the name of the Siamese capital, was one of the sixteen "great countries" of classical India. According to the Rāmayana, Ayutthayâ was associated with the God Vishnu (his Nârâi incarnation in this case) when he was reincarnated as Rama to defend the human world against the force of evil. In theory, the Siamese kings assumed a similar rôle, as they styled themselves with the official title "Râmâthibọdî". The worshipping of an image of the God Vishnu did exist in Ayutthayâ times, but this seems to have involved the apotheosis of the inner-self of the founder of Ayutthayâ. The "Devarāja" image even took precedence over the Triple Gems in the state ceremonies, a practice only abolished in 1785.[58] As a Buddhist state, Ayutthayâ

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57) KTS: 685

58) KTS: 767-8

had to have a Buddhist king and play down the Hindu tradition, at least, in the eyes of the public. The synthesis was achieved whereby Buddha was presented as one of the cycle of ten of Vishnu's avatār (reincarnations).[59] Thus, Ayutthayan kings were addressed "Phra Phutthačhâo" or "Your Grace, Lord Buddha" by their subjects.

It is in this historical context and ideological framework that the phongsâwadân were conceived and compiled by court historiographers. The primary aim of the phongsâwadân was to record royal activities, religious and worldly, so as to justify each king's rule and to bring him blessings. In the meanwhile, the phongsâwadân were used by court historians as a means of legitimizing the position of a usurper according to the Buddhist notions of kamma (doing-action) and bun (merit). While paying a great deal of care to describing certain ceremonies in considerable detail, the compilers would say almost nothing about other aspects of life of the kingdom such as foreign trade and relations with the European powers and China. The underlying belief appears to have been that the healthy state of the kingdom depended upon the king's ability to maintain the harmony of impersonal forces by acting upon the Brahman priests' advice and acquire as much merit as he could.

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59) The incarnation of Vishnu as Buddha is originally foreign to the cycle of the avatār of Vishnu as described in the Purānas. Where this is alluded to in some of them, the intention must have been to effect a compromise between Brahmanism and Buddhism, by trying to represent the latter religion as not irreconcilably antagonistic to the former. The most well-known story of Vishnu's reincarnation as Rāma is the great epic Ramayana. In the fifth century A.D., it seems, the Buddhists had absorbed this Hindu legend into their tradition in the form of the Dasarathajātaka (No. 461) in which Buddha is said to be born as Rama in one of his 500 births. See: W.J. Wilkins, Hindu Mythology, Vedic and Purānic, Calcutta, 1882: 188-205; E.J. Thomas, The Life of Buddha as Legend and History, 1949: 10-2

On the other hand, the compilers liked to glorify the king's aspiration to become a cakravartin, "Wheel-turning Monarch", or at least a mahârâchâ, "King of Kings". A king's greatness was measured by the number of minor kings who sought refuge in him or submitted to him. As a result, more than half the pages of the phongsâwadân are filled with details of military campaigns.

There are ten versions of the Annals of Ayutthayâ, that were written in the phongsâwadân fashion with the emphasis being placed on the royal family rather than on the progress of Buddhism. Three recensions date from the Ayutthayâ period whereas the rest were compiled during the early Bangkok period. They will be discussed in Chapter II.

CHAPTER I

Tamnân: Buddhist Myths and History

The origin of tamnân history has been discussed in the foregoing pages, and it has been emphasized that the writing of tamnân must be considered an aspect of Theravada Buddhism. In the Tai situation, as has been pointed out, the subjects of tamnân history are usually Buddhist principalities, religious institutions or foundations, images, or reliquaries.[1] As a genre of historical literature, tamnân are characterized by their Buddhist associations,[2] and they are presented through the eyes of Buddhist monks. With rare exceptions, Coedès seems to have given little credibility to this type of historical writing.[3] Indeed, since the beginning of this century, historians have tended to regard tamnân as unreliable and too fabled. Without these religious chronicles, however, one cannot truly understand the literary process that has come to influence modern Thai views of the distant past. The gist of the argument will be that tamnân may not indeed be as useful a source of ancient Thai history as one might think, but they are testimony of the age in which they were written. In fact, Thai history in general has been distorted and more or less Siamese-oriented because of our neglect of the tamnân culture of Lân-Nä Thai. Further discussion should support my claims that Chiang Mai was a far more important cultural centre of

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1) D.K. Wyatt, "Chronicle Traditions in Thai Historiography" in C.D. Cowan and O.W. Wolters, op.cit.: 109

2) ibid.

3) Coedès, Indianized States: 134
——— , "Notes sur les ouvrages palis composés en pays thai", BEFEO, 15, 2 (1915): 44

the Tai world than Ayutthayâ during its first period of independence, especially from 1440 to 1558.

In a recent survey by Sommâi and his colleagues at the University of Chiang Mai, who visited 244 monasteries in the three provinces of Lân-Nâ Thai, Chiang Mai, Chiang Râi, and Phayao, some 4,973 important palm-leaf manuscripts were discovered in wat libraries. The majority of these manuscripts are Pali works covering all aspects of Pali literature and Buddhism. Among these texts, 137 manuscripts are tamnân history concerning the advent of Buddhism in northern Thailand, and 113 fascicles dealing with the history of Chiang Mai and other Lân-Nâ Thai principalities.[4] This large collection of Pali works attests to the fact that Chiang Mai was once the foremost Theravada kingdom in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

I

The Arrival of "Siṅhalese" Buddhism: its Impact on the Chiang Mai Saṅgha, and its Contribution to the Golden Age of Lân-Nâ Thai Literature (1423-1558)

According to a tamnân history, written in Pali by a Chiang Mai monk named Phôthirangsî, the natives of Lamphûn (Hariphunchai) were non-Buddhist savages called Lúa or Lawâ, and Meng (Mọn).[5] Sometime in the seventh century A.D., an

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4) Sommâi Premčhit, op.cit.: 83

5) Phôthirangsi, Phra, Châmmathéwîwong: Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Hariphunchai, "Cāmadevivamsa: A History of the Mọn Kingdom of Hariphunchai", translated from Pali into Siamese by Phrayâ Pariyattithammathâdâ (Phè), Bangkok: Bannakit, 1973: 22; The word used to describe the natives is Meṅgavanaputra, "Meng, Sons of the Wild"

ascetic called Wâsuthep built the city of Hariphuchai and invited a virtuous daughter of the king of Lawô (Lopburî) to rule at the new city. This is the legendary origin of Queen Châmmathéwî, whose coming to Upper Siam with five hundred Buddhist monks from the ancient Mon centre at Lopburî is the subject matter of Phôthirangsî's Pali chronicle, Cāmadevīvamsa, written according to one authority in the first half of the fifteenth century,[6] and in the second half according to another opinion.[7] The establishment of Hinayāna Buddhism at Hariphunchai by Châmmathéwî became a deep-rooted tradition in the religious thinking of Lân-Nâ Thai. The Cāmadevīvaṃsa equates the advent of Buddhism with light of civilization, and the victory of Châmmathéwî in the war against the chief of the Milakkha (autochthons) symbolizes the magical superiority of Buddhism over animism.[8] All religious tamnân agree that Hariphunchai was the first Buddhist centre in the north. Coedès believed that the date of Châmmathéwî's arrival should actually fall in the eighth century A.D. if any sense was to be made from the chronology of her dynasty.[9] Châmmathéwî's descendants ruled Hariphunchai from the eighth century to 1292 when its last king was ousted by Mangrâi, a Tai chief who came from Chiang Râi. In between those years, the authority of this Mon kingdom must have extended over the whole of northern Thailand.

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6) Coedès, op.cit.
7) Likhit Likhitânon, "Yuk Thong Hèng Wannakam Phutthasâtsanâ Khong Lân-Nâ Thai", Wârasân Manutsayasât (WM), 10, 1 (Jan.-Mar. 1980): 30; The English translation of this article is to be found in Sèng & Narúphon, Buddhism in Northern Thailand: 64-80
8) D.K. Swearer, "Myth, Legend and History in the Northern Thai Chronicles", JSS, 62, 1(Jan. 1974): 79-83
9) Coedès, "Documents": 25

Little is known of Hariphunchai from the tamnân sources. The Jn and the Cāmadevīvamsa are based on the "Chronique Royale de Hariphunchai" which preserved merely the name of Châmmathéwî's successors and hardly mentioned any event for any reign with the exception of the reign of Âthittarât, who, Jn says, ruled from 1047; Coedès believed this king ruled in the middle of the twelfth century.[10] Âthittarât has a special place in the tamnân tradition of Lân-Nâ Thai because he was responsible for the building of the Great Reliquary of Lamphûn, which is still the most important Buddhist monument in northern Thailand. A large portion of both Jn and the Cāmadevīvamsa is devoted to describing the long-drawn-out war between the Mon of Hariphunchai and the Khmer who had put an end to the Mon domination at Lawô and extended their control over the lower Mènâm basin in the middle of the eleventh century.[11] Âthittarât may have successfully thwarted Angkor's attempts to extend its sway farther north at least until 1167. Coedès thought that an inscription dated 1167 A.D., unearthed at Dong Mènâng Mû'ang was erected by Âthittarât, who used the title Sî Thammâsôk.[12] After his death, towards the end of the twelfth century, Hariphunchai was perhaps diminished by the loss of Upper Siam to the great Khmer king, Jayavarman VII (1181-c.1220).

The Tai Yuan were indebted to the Mon of Hariphunchai in many ways, especially in the field of letters and arts.

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10) ibid.
11) ibid.: 80-83, 158-160
12) G. Coedès, "Nouvelles données épigraphiques sur l'histoire de l'indochine central", JA, 246 (1958): 138-9

Tai Yuan script was derived from the old Mon script.[13] Hariphunchai itself was to remain the spiritual centre of the new kingdom for the next 150 years until Chiang Mai became the centre of Buddhist learning in the reign of King Tilôk. Before then, every religious movement would start at Hariphunchai, and spread to Chiang Mai and other places in Lân-Nâ Thai.

The cultural intercourse between Burmese Pagan, Mon Hariphunchai, and Tai Chiang Râi (Yônnarat in Pali literature) had been long established even before Mangrâi's seizure of Hariphunchai.[14] Pagan had developed into the most flourishing Buddhist centre in twelfth-century mainland South-East Asia.[15] This had a lasting effect on the intimate relationship between the Tai Yuan and Pagan Burmese. From the beginning, Tai Yuan monks must have regarded Pagan as an alternative centre to Ceylon where they could receive religious training. By the second quarter of the thirteenth century, the sect of "forest-dwellers" had become influential in Pagan under the leadership of Mahākassapa.[16] These forest-dwellers

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13) G. Coedès, Tamnân Akson Thai, "A History of Thai Alphabets", Bangkok, 1925: 138-9

14) An art historian talks especially of a C13th Mon iconographic tradition at Hariphunchai. The influence of Pagan architecture, for example, is manifest in the shape of the pyramid of Wat Kû Kut, Lamphûn. See: Hiram W. Woodward, Studies in the Art of Central Siam, 950-1350 A.D., Ph.D. Thesis, Yale University, 1975: 130-7; Northern Thai chronicles invariably maintain that Mangrâi's forefathers, especially Lâo Chok, were tributary kings of Anawrahta (1044-77) of Pagan. The adoption of the Burmese Era, "Chunlasakkarât", from the earliest time by the Tai Yuan seems to have been an aspect of the cultural intercourse between Pagan and Yônokkarat.

15) The rise of the orthodox Siṅhalese sect in Burma in the second half of the twelfth century A.D. is associated with a Burmese monk named Chapata, who returned to Burma from Ceylon with the belief that the Mahāvihāra sect of Ceylon alone had kept the legitimated "line of descent" unbroken

remind one of the ṛsi (ascetics) in the religious tamnân of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Mahākassapa was also remembered in many tamnân, but he was fused into his namesake, Mahākassapa, who was Buddha's first disciple. The number of forest-dwelling monks was probably large, and some of them did not lead an abstemious life. In 1369, when King Kilanâ invited Sumanathera from Sukhôthai to propagate Siṅhalese Buddhism in Phingkharat Chiang Mai, the sect of "forest-dwellers" had declined rapidly at Pagan.[17] The bad reputation of these monks may have prompted the Chiang Mai king to look elsewhere for inspiration.

The Siṅhalese sect brought to Chiang Mai by Sumanathera was known as the Râmanyawong, "Mon School", owing to the fact that Sumanathera had not been to Ceylon himself, but was reordained into the Siṅhalese sect by Uthumphon, the Mon Patriarch of Martaban, who had spent 12 years studying Buddhism in Ceylon.[18] In 1371 King Kilanâ had a monastery built and named it Wat Bupphârâm, "Flowery Abode". Hoping to purify the Chiang Mai saṅgha, the king "invited all the local monks previously ordained by the teachers of the Buddhist sect established

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from teacher to teacher, and that valid ordination could only be received in Ceylon. It was during this period that Burmese monks began to compose Pali literature in earnest. Mabel Haynes Bode, The Pali Literature of Burma, London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1909: 16-9

16) Than Tun, "Mahākassapa and His Tradition", Journal of the Burma Research Society (JBRS), 42, 2 (Dec. 1959): 100

17) ibid.: 105

18) Sommâi Premčhit and Phuangkham Tuikhiaw, (eds), Tamnân Mûnlasâtsanâ Chabap Wat Pâdèng, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Chiang Mai University, 1976: 7; Sommâi Premčhit and Donald K. Swearer, "A Translation of Tamnân Mulasāsanā Wat Pā Daeng: The Chronicle of the Founding of Buddhism of the Wat Pā Daeng Tradition", JSS, 62, 2 (Jul. 1977): 80; Hereafter reference will be made to the English translation, and this religious chronicle will be cited as MS/PD.

since the time of Queen Châmmathéwî to be reordained because he did not believe in the monks of the old sect who used different styles of chanting."[19] In all, it is said 8,400 monks were reordained by Sumana.[20] The king also invited Sumanathera to become the first abbot of the new monastery, and Wat Bupphârâm was from then on to be regarded as the Royal Monastery enjoying the king's patronage. It appears that the Mon School at Wat Bupphârâm had brought little change to the saṅgha, while it became wealthy with all kinds of endowments. Interestingly, the Mon School had minor interest in Ceylon but maintained close contact with its brethren in Burma. It was fashionable for Tai monks to go and receive religious instruction at Pagan.[21]* Some went on pilgrimage there as did the Mahāthera Mahāsāmī (Great Patriarch) Rājaguru (Royal Preceptor) in 1393.[22] The title "Great Patriarch" at that time was undoubtedly conferred by the king upon the abbot of Wat Bupphârâm. The Mahāsāmī, who visited and left an inscription there in 1393, was Sumanathera's successor and nephew, Kumārakassapa, who became the second abbot of Wat Bupphârâm in 1388.[23]

In the early 1420s, the Chiang Mai saṅgha was shaken by

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19) ibid.: 82
20) ibid.
21) "Tamnân Wat Bupphârâm Suandokmâi" (TWBS) in Sa-nguan Chôtisukharat, Prachum Tamnân Lân-Nâ Thai, vol. II, Bangkok: Odeon Store, 1972: 184
22) G.H. Luce and Ba Shin, "A Chiang Mai Mahāthera Visits Pagán (1393)", AA, 24 (1961): 335
23) PTLT/II: 179; Phra Phutthaphukâm and Phra Phutthayân, Tamnân Munlasâtsanâ, translated from Tai Yuan into Siamese by Sut Sisomwong and Phrom Khamâlâ, Special volume for the funeral of Khunying Song Phonlaphâp, Bangkok, 3 Dec. 1939: 260; As it is written in the Wat Suan Dok tradition, this work will be cited as MS/SD

* Cf. the name "Mahā Phukâm [Pagan] Chão", the Patriarch of Chiang Mai in 1489. PSč/III: No. 68, F.2/8/168

by the news brought back from Ceylon by a thera monk named Sitthanta. This monk, together with three disciples from Wat Bupphârâm, travelled to Ceylon in 1420 in order to worship the Great Reliquary (Mahādhātu). Sitthanta returned to Chiang Mai in 1423, and reported to the assembly of monks that while in Ceylon their kammavācā (verbal declaration) and pātimōkkha (code of 227 precepts for a Buddhist monk) were criticized by the Ceylonese saṅgha as being incorrect. This criticism led to the conclusion that no Chiang Mai monk was a real Buddhist monk. Another charge was that the Tai Yuan monks did not know Pali properly; the Ceylonese monks said, "Our language has 41 consonants, but yours has only 32; you make the am sound into ām."[24] Consequently, Sitthanta was not allowed to join the saṅghakamma, "performing of Buddhist rites".

It was only in 1423 that another Chiang Mai monk was sent to study Buddhist practices in Ceylon at the request of the Ceylonese saṅgha.[25] The Mûnlasâtsanâ Wat Pâdèng (MS/PD) explains that Somdet Thammakitti, abbot of Wat Chôtikârâm, advised his disciple, Yânnakhamphî, to ask for permission and the support of King Sâmfangkèn (1401-41), and that the king was delighted to help and supply the young monk with necessities.[26] The queen also gave some encouragement to Yânnakhamphî's religious venture. The Jn and MS/PD agree on the date of this mission but not on the number of monks who travelled with Yânnakhamphî, whom the Jn calls Mahâthammakhamphî. Jn

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24) MS/PD: 87
25) ibid.: 89
26) ibid.: 88

tells us that 25 Tai Yuan monks set out from Chiang Mai and were joined by eight monks from the Kambōja region. It gives the names of some monks from the Chiang Mai group as follows: Mahâthammakhamphî, Mahâméthangkǫn, Mahâyânnamongkhon, Mahâsî-lawong, Mahâsârîbut, Mahârattanakǫn, and Mahâphutthasâkhǫn.[27] MS/PD gives some more intimate details which differ from Jn. It lists the names of five other monks, who accompanied Yânna-khamphî, and who resided in the monasteries under the juris-diction of Somdet Thammakitti. These five monks were Méthang-kǫn and Yânnamongkhon from Wat Kutîkham, Chantharangsî and Yânnasit from Wat Chédîkham, and Rattanâk from Wat Nanthârâm.[28] They went to Ayōdhiyā (Ayutthayâ) to request the support of King Bǫrommarâchâ II (1424-48). The king arranged for one official named Supharatti to facilitate the monks' journey through his kingdom. It is reported that the king's precep-tor, Somdet Thammakhamphî, sent along six Siamese monks with this group. They travelled all together via the Mǫn territory in Lower Burma.[29]

One of the most mysterious things in the Jn that seems to have puzzled everybody is the mentioning of monks from "Kambōja". Coedès and those who follow him think it meant Cambodia.[30] Sèng Monwithûn believes it was the Lopburî re-gion.[31] The discovery of MS/PD in 1976 has clarified this point; "Kambōja" in the tamnân tradition of Lân-Nâ Thai could

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27) Coedès, "Documents": 104-5; Sèng Monwithûn, (tr.), Jina-kālamālīpakaranam, Special edition in commemoration of Nâi Kî Nimmanhémin, Bangkok: Mitnarâ Press, 1967: 121
28) MS/PD: 88
29) ibid.
30) Coedès, op.cit.: 105
31) Sèng, op.cit.: 121

also mean the Lopburî-Ayutthayâ region on the east bank of Châophrayâ river-system.[32] The compiler of Jn (1516) had a clear geographical notion of central Thailand in ancient times; Suphanburî and the area west of the Châophrayâ river-system are often referred to as "Suwannaphûm" (Suvaṇṇabhūmí) or "Golden Lands",[33] and Upper Siam from Nakhǫn Sawan up to Lamphûn is called by the Pali term, Syāmadesa, "Land of the Syâm (Siamese)".[34] This geographical notion is quite essential to our understanding of the religious tamnân, but I shall return to it later.

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32) That "Kambōja" meant Lopburî, and not Angkor (Kambūja) is quite clear in Chau Ju-kua's Chu-fan-chih, "A Description of Barbarous Peoples" (1225 A.D.), which says that the capital of Chen-la was Lu-wu, obviously "Lawô" (ancient name of Lopburî). The Chinese author became confused by the similarity of the two names. See the section on Kamboja in Friedrich Hirth and W.W. Rockhill, (trs), Chau Ju-kua, St. Petersburg, 1911: 52

33) In the "Tamnân Phra Phuttharûp Kènčhan" (History of the Sandal Buddha Image), reproduced by Rattanapanyâ in Jn, it is said that:

> "Âthitčharât, born in the family of the king of Suwannaphûm, and son of King Nǫrabǫdî, transported the Sandal Buddha Image from the city of Suwannaphûm, and after founding a city on the summit of Mount Wichep in the district called Wichet (Tâk?) in Syāmadesa, which was a different country from Suwannaphûm, he worshipped the Sandal Buddha there."
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> (Sèng, op.cit.: 163-4; Coedès, op.cit.: 135-6)

The earliest reference to Suwannaphûm is to be found in the Râmkhamhèng inscription of 1292? (PSč/I: No. 1, F.4/21/26) But the term "Svarnpura" (Suwannapura) or "Golden Lands" appears in the stèle of Preah Khan erected by Jayavarman VII (1181-c.1220). According to Coedès, this means also Suphanburî, Ū-Thǫng, and Kânčhanaburî. See: PSč/IV: No. 116, F.3/68/188

34) In the tamnân tradition "Syāmadesa" is never used to mean any princedom in particular, but Upper Siam in general. Hariphunchai and Sukhôthai are said to be in the Syāmadesa. The area east of the Châophrayâ river-system is called either "Lavapura" or "Kambōja". A sentence in Jn makes it clear that one cannot equate the city of Sukhôthai specifically with Syāmadesa for it says: "At this period a dhammarāja (Just King) was ruling at Sukhôthai in the Syamadesa". Syāmadesa or "Land of the Siamese" designates a geographical area, not a kingdom.

Sèng, op.cit.: 108; Coedès, op.cit.: 95

The Jn and MS/PD, in particular the latter, emphasize the task of Yânnakhamphî's mission to bring back true Buddhism, and the knowledge of Pali literature and Pali commentaries.[35] Yânnakhamphî and other Tai monks received reordination, and took great pains to learn to chant in the Siñhalese way. The reason for this is that, "If monks do not follow the correct language, the dhamma-pitaka /Buddhist Scriptures/ will be distorted. If the dhamma-pitaka is corrupted, the monastic rules will be also; the monks' behaviour will not be in conformity with the vinaya /Buddhist Disciplines/; they will serve the laity for their own livelihood, abandoning pindapāta /morning begging round/ without shame".[36]

In 1428 Yânnakhamphî and his followers left Ceylon taking with them Buddha images, the dhamma-pitaka, and a branch of the fig tree of Ceylon.[37] Upon their arrival at Mergui and Tenasserim, the Mon king welcomed them and invited all the the monks in his kingdom to be reordained and follow the new teaching. The three sources concerning the activities of this group of monks differ a great deal from each other. Jn skips over the event at Ayutthayâ which is particularly highlighted by the authors of the MS/PD and the MS/SD. MS/PD tells us that these monks were heartily welcomed by the king when they reached Ayutthayâ in 1429, and that the king's preceptor was so pleased that he asked the king to abandon the old sect and invite all the Siamese monks to be reordained in the new order.[38] MS/SD gives another side to the story, and describes

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35) MS/PD: 90-1
36) ibid.: 91
37) ibid.
38) ibid.: 92

the arrival of Yânnakhamphî and his associates as a divisive force in the saṅgha. It unfolds the story like this:-

> They /the five monks originally from Chiang Mai/ went to Ceylon to be reordained as bhikkhu (monk). They all came back and resided at Ayôthayâ. They professed what food was right and what meal was forbidden. They believed that accepting coins, silver, gold, and rice was forbidden. They dressed up the čhiwọn (long yellow robe), the end of which they folded up and put beneath the begging bowl. They were against monks carrying a walking stick. They came with that faith from Ayôthayâ. (This is because) at that time Bọrommarâchâ was the king of Ayôthayâ. Those monks wanted to defame the Order in which Mahâsumana Châo had ordained young men, and persuade them to turn to their Order. At that time a learned thera monk named Thammatrailôk, being so proud of his knowledge, did not listen to monks of the new Order. Then they quarrelled. The king said: "Reverends, you are all engaged in altercation. This is not a good thing to happen in my kingdom. I shall have a raft made in the river so that you can carry on debating. The king had a raft made and invited the monks to debate on it. They did but Thammatrailôk lost in the argument. Finally they all resorted to violence. The king was displeased and expelled Yânnakhamphî and his group from the city. They travelled up north bringing their faith with them.[39]

MS/SD goes on to say that when the monks of the Siṅhalese School arrived in Chiang Mai, they levelled charges against monks of the old Order on the grounds that the latter misbehaved because they accepted coins, silver, and gold. People flocked to them to receive reordination despite the disapproval of the abbot of Wat Suan Dọk Mâi. A dispute arose because of the criticism by the Siṅhalese monks of the monks of Wat

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39) MS/SD: 252

Bupphârâm who carried a walking stick while on begging rounds. The abbot of Wat Bupphârâm (Suan Dǫk Mâi) was so incensed that he brought the matter before the king.[40] The king arranged for an ecclesiastic disputation to take place. The "Siṅhalese" monks were overwhelmed and defeated in the argument. A violent brawl broke out and the king decided to expel the Siṅhalese monks from Chiang Mai. It is suggested in the text that the king sided with the Suan Dǫk monks because "they have money, silver, and gold to buy; they have possessions, land and rice-fields".[41] Justifying the king's cause, MS/SD describes the king as "acting upon the preaching of the monks, and observing always the religious words and precepts".[42] On the other hand, Jn describes this king, Sâmfangkèn (1401-41) as "having little faith in the Religion, believing in heretical. turning away from virtuous people, he worshipped demons and evil spirits. He sacrificed cows and buffaloes. His subjects were like followers of a demon".[43]

The schism of the saṅgha was widely reflected in the religious tamnân of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. MS/SD and the Tamnân Wat Bupphârâm Suan Dǫk Mâi (TWBSDM) undoubtedly air the resentment of the monks of the Mǫn School, whereas MS/PD and Jn state the case and justification of the Sinhalese monks.[44]

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40) ibid.: 254
41) ibid.: 253
42) ibid.: 255
43) Coedès, op.cit.: 104; Sèng, op.cit.: 120
44) The history of religious disputes at Chiang Mai provides us with another example of the usual factional rivalry between religious sects within a Theravāda saṅgha. The same sort of disputes took place in Ceylon, Burma, and Siam. It has been observed that disputes within the Theravāda Buddhist tradition have rarely focused on doctrinal question, but on questions of monastic discipline.

The issues that came to the fore in the mid-C15th were brought forth by the radical "Siñhalese" monks. To halt the decline of Buddhism, which was expected to last according to an ancient prophecy only 5,000 years, the "Sinhalese" monks wanted their brotherhood at Chiang Mai to promote Buddhism by reverting to orthodoxy, i.e. to lead their life strictly according to the rules of the vinaya. They considered that accumulating worldly possissions such as money, silver, and gold in the way monks of the Mọn School had done was not proper for one who set his mind on eliminating tanhâ (craving). But more important than the misconduct of the monks of Wat Bupphârâm was the Siñhalese monks' refusal to perform religious ceremonies with the Mọn monks, whose ordination they considered invalid. MS/PD explains that back in 1331, when Uthumphọn, the Mọn Patriarch of Martaban, had gone with his pupils to study Buddhism in Ceylon, they had stayed there for twelve years. On their way home, one of the five reordained monks had died at sea. A lay disciple had then been ordained with a Buddha image being used to complete the requisite number of monks taking part in the ordination ceremony.[45] The Siñhalese monks raised some objections against the way of convenience

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The last schism in the Siamese saṅgha occurred in the 1830s when Prince-Monk Mongkut and Phra Wannarat (Phatthasiri) initiated an "orthodox" movement within the saṅgha, and led the break-away sect, the Thammayutika Nikāya, "Order Adhering to the Dhamma". A.T. Kirsch, "Modernizing Implications of 19th Century Reforms in the Thai Sangha", CAS, 8: The Psychological Study of Theravada Societies, 1975: 9

45) MS/PD: 80; Prasert ṇa Nagara, "Tamnân Mûnlasâtsanâ Wat Pâ Dèng Chiang Tung" in Khun Warunyuphâ Snitwong and Wutthichai Mûnlasin, (eds), Anusọn Sâtsatrâčhân Khačhọn Sukhaphânit, "Essays in Commemoration of Professor Khachọn Sukhaphânit", Bangkok: Sèngrung Press, 1978: 45

of ordaining Uthumphǫn's fifth follower. It was on this ground that they could not accept those who had been reordained by Uthumphǫn and his four companions. As the founder of the Mǫn School in Chiang Mai, Sumanathera, had been ordained by the five Mǫn monks of Martaban, his own ordination was invalid. This meant theoretically that all Chiang Mai monks ordained by Sumana could not be regarded as Buddhist monks at all. But it is understandable why the "Mǫn" monks were opposed to reordination. In the saṅgha one's seniority (vassa) is determined by the length of time after being accepted into the Order. It is unlikely that senior monks in the Mǫn School would sacrifice their established position to join the new "orthodox" Order.

Tamnân traditions concerning the meteoric rise of the Sinhalese School at Chiang Mai are confusingly varied. The Tamnân Râtchawongpakǫn, "Chronicle of Chiang Mai" states clearly that Châo Lok (later King Tilôk) with the help of a nobleman plotted the downfall of his father, King Sâmfangkèn, in 1441.[46] This incident is more or less confirmed by MS/SD and Jn, as both say that Sâmfangkèn abdicated in favour of his son.[47] MS/SD implies that apart from the king (Sâmfangkèn) himself, the nobility were against the monks of the old Order, and suggested that "the latter's rice-fields that had been bestowed be confiscated and distributed to the people".[48] MS/PD strangely maintains that Sâmfangkèn was assassinated by

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46) PTLT/I: 291-2; Camille Notton, (tr.), Annales du Siam, III: Chronique de Xieng Mái, Paris, 1932: 103-4

47) MS/SD: 255; Coedès, op.cit.: 107; Sèng, op.cit.: 123

48) MS/SD: 253

the people while Yânnakhamphî and his disciples were at Lamphûn.[49] In another place it says that "Phrayâ Sâmfangkèn requested Mahâ Yânnakhamphî to go to study Buddhism in Ceylon. He did not arrive back before Sâmfangkèn's death".[50] Perhaps we have to assume that the compiler of MS/PD wanted to dissociate his Order from worldly affairs; but to achieve this he had to distort some well-known facts or omit them. The author of Jn, Rattanapanyâ, has little to hide, describing the king who had sided with the Mon School in the most hideous term, "heretic" and "demon worshipper".[51] He does not explain the situation in which King Tilôk came to the throne, but praises him with the greatest possible title, "Siri Dhammacakkavatti Tilaka Rājadhirāja" (His Majesty, King Tilôk Who is King of Kings, a Universal Monarch Who Upholds the Law of Buddha).[52]

It was during Tilôk's reign that monks of Siṅhalese School enjoyed the royal patronage. The sudden change in King Tilôk's attitude was influenced by political as well as theological reasons. On the political plane, the Suan Dok monks had hoarded up enough wealth to become a political force; and endowments already given to the saṅgha could not easily be expropriated. In the religious dispute, it was appropriate for Tilôk to follow the precedent set by the great Indian king, Aśoka (C3th B.C.), who gave support to the more orthodox monks of the Orders involved in the dispute. Purifying the saṅgha was a way of making certain that the king acquired

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49) MS/PD: 94
50) ibid.: 99
51) same as fn. 43
52) Coedès, op.cit.: 108; Sèng, op.cit.: 124

the merit due in return for the endowments he showered on the true monks. In this case, the Siṅhalese monks -called the "Wat Pâ Dèng faction" in the tamnân- had a better claim than the Mọn monks for royal patronage. Tilôk's approval came soon after his accession to the throne.[53] In 1447, he entered the monkhood for a short period as mark of respect and for the benefit of his parents.[54] What Tilôk made fully clear was the request that he be ordained by Siṅhalese monks. Mahâthera Méthangkọn, one of the original five Chiang Mai monks of the Sinhalese School, was chosen the king's religious instructor (kammavācāriya).[55]

At first the actions taken to reduce the influence of the Suan Dọk monks were drastic. Certain grants of land and property were revoked and reconsidered in favour of the Siṅhalese School.[56] As a gesture of gratitude for their support, the king built many new monasteries for the Siṅhalese monks.[57] The dispute was carried on to other towns like Chiang Tung and Chiang Sèn. As the Suan Dọk monks were more numerous than the Siṅhalese monks the dispute would not die down. Tilôk still tried to reconcile the two Schools. When a Buddhist Council for the Revision of Buddhist Texts was or-

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53) Cnly five months after the new king came to the throne, sponsored the simultaneous ordination of 500 young men by the Siṅhalese monks under the supervision of Mahâthera Méthangkọn and Mahâthera Mongkhonsîlâwong.

54) Coedès, op.cit.: 109; Sèng, op.cit.: 125; From MS/SD: 260, we know that Tilôk entered the monkhood for seven days.

55) Coedès, op.cit.: 110; Sèng, op.cit.: 126

56) Prasert, op.cit.: 45

57) Coedès, op.cit.: 110-1; Sèng, op.cit.: 126-7; The two leading wats during Tilôk's reign were Wat Pâ Dèng, where the funeral of the previous king and queen was held; and Wat Phôthârâm, built in 1455 as the abode of Phra Mahâthera Uttamapanyâ, a Siṅhalese monk.

ganized in 1477, 100 monks from the two Schools were invited to convene and discuss religious scriptures for a period of over a year.[58] The harmony did not last long because, in 1509, a local dispute between monks of the two Schools at Chiang Tung got so serious that King Mû'ang Kèw (1495-1525) had to intervene to settle the matter by sending a message saying that: "Chiang Mai support the monks of both Orders. Do not bring about a deterioration of the Religion of Buddha".[59] The two Orders accepted the king's arbitration, and it is reported: "From that time on the Religion prospered greatly".[60] In truth, the theological polemic concerning apparently minor issues could erupt and divide the saṅgha into opposing factions. A later incident occurred under Burmese rule. Anxious to maintain the Chiang Mai tradition, King Thalun of Burma (r.1629-48) sent some officials together with offerings and gifts to Chiang Mai in 1638. The Burmese king offered to sponsor an ordination of a thousand young men. At that time, learned monks started debating the true meaning of some Pali phrases and could not agree on the other side's interpretation.

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58) "Rû'ang Kân Sangkhâiyanâ Tham" (History of the Buddhist Councils) in PTLT/II: 132-3; Strangely enough, none of religious tamnân written in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries highlights this event. Jn refers to it quite briefly whereas MS/SD and MS/PD make no mention of it at all. Coedès, op.cit.: 129; Sèng, op.cit.: 149
It appears that the Thai tradition concerning the various Buddhist Councils was established by Somdet Phra Wannarat, author of the Pali chronicle, Sangītiyavamsa, written in 1789 in commemoration of the Buddhist Council sponsored by Râmâ I (1782-1809) in the previous year. See also Chapter II, pp. 239

59) MS/PD: 109

60) ibid.

The leading Burmese official abandoned the plan to have a joint ordination and asked the Siṅhalese monks to carry out the ordination for those who wished to join them and the Mon monks to do the same for those who wanted to join their Order.[61)]

II

Pali Literature and its Influence on the Tamnân Writing

It has been pointed out that at times the standard of Pali study at Chiang Mai was so low that Yânnakhamphî and his followers went to Ceylon to learn the sacred language of the Buddhist canon and how to chant the texts correctly. Having returned to Chiang Mai in 1431, they felt not only had they been able to restore the legitimate line of succession of Siṅhalese Buddhism in Chiang Mai, but also they had brought back knowledge of Pali literature and Buddhist texts written by ancient masters. In subsequent periods when the Siṅhalese School had become influential, it was fashionable for monks from Chiang Mai to go to Ceylon to study Pali and Buddhism. According to Prince Damrong,

> In between 2000 B.E. and 2200 B.E. /c̄.1450-1650 A.D./, monks from Lân-Nâ Thai would travel to Ceylon for the purpose of studying. They had proficient knowledge of the Pali language and emulated Ceylonese monks in composing Pali texts in their own country after they had come back from Ceylon. Some of the texts are exegetical such as the Maṅgaladīpanī, others were written in the form of Buddhist "universal" history such as the Jinakālamālī. Some Pali works were written following the fashion of the Mahāvamsa, the Great Chronicle of

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61) PTLT/II: 210-2

> Ceylon, others were written in the same way as the Nipātajātakas such as the Panyâtchâdok. Pali was used to promote the permanency of Buddhism and to make those texts a suitable source of reference. This is because Pali is the language of the Buddhist Scriptures.[62]

The evidence we have suggests that a flourishing period of Pali literature coincided with the rise of the orthodox monks at Chiang Mai and the ensuing dispute between the Mon and Sinhalese Schools. The quality of which the new School was most proud was its superior knowledge of Pali treatises and the ability to produce Pali works. This new spirit extended beyond the scope of pure religious commentaries. Formerly, tamnân and local traditions may have been written in Tai Yuan. Many monks soon came to believe that they would acquire a great measure of merit and earn reputation as Pali scholars by rendering various tamnân into Pali. The importance attached to this was clearly stated by Phra Phôthirangsî, compiler of the well-known Cāmadevīvamsa in these terms:-

> If I were to recite this text /Camadevivamsa/ in Thai in the same manner as done by other scholars, (it would seem to me that) the Thai language is neither consistent nor appropriate to be the language of those who have taken refuge in the citadel of the Great Conqueror. Thus, I shall render the Thai version of this story into the Pali language to make it a gambīra (sacred Pali text) beautifully arranged in chapters and sentences which are pleasant to the ears and delightful to the mind so that faith will awaken in men.[63]

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62) Damrong, Prince, "Introduction", Panyâtchâdok, "50-Jātakas", Cremation volume for M.R. Lek Siriwong na Krungthep, Bangkok: Sôphonphiphatthanâkon, 1924: 2

63) Phôthirangsî, op.cit.: 20

Another monk, Phrommarâtchapanyâ, composer of a Pali work called Rattanabimbavamsa, "Legend of the Emerald Buddha", said of his work that:-

> These words which have been told for a long time about the peregination of the Emerald Buddha have been re-composed in the Pali language by a bikkhu of two vassā whose name is Phrommarâtchapanyâ. This having been completed, may the faith in the religion enhance in all good men.[64]

Phrommarâtchapanyâ was a young monk of only two vassā (rainy seasons). He was probably only twenty-three years old, given that one could be ordained at the age of twenty-one. As a Pali scholar, he must have had an immense talent. Nevertheless, this was not the only exceptional case -the popular Panyâtchâdok, "50-Jātakas" stories are thought by one authority to have been works of novices.[65] Although strict religious writings do not come within the purview of this study, it must be emphasized that they reflect an intense interest in the Pali composition brought about by the rivalry between the Mon and Sinhalese Schools. Thai scholars talk of this phenomenon in terms of a "Golden Age of Lân-Nâ Thai Literature",[66] not without some justification in that Chiang Mai was the leading Tai state in the period between 1441 and 1558

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64) Phrommarâtpanyâ, Phra, Tamnân Phra Kèw Morakot Chabap Sombûn, "Legend of the Emerald Buddha", translated from Rattanabimbavamsa by Phrayâ Pariyattithammathâdâ in 1920, Bangkok, 1961: 158; The Pali text was first translated into Siamese in 1783 by Phrayâ Thammaparôhit (Kèw), a prominent scholar during the reigns of Phrachâo Tâk and Râmâ I.

65) H. Saddhatissa, "Pali Literature of Thailand" in L. Cousins et al., (eds), Buddhist Studies in Honour of I.B. Horner, Dordrecht-Holland, 1974: 221

66) Likhit, op.cit.: 22-42

so far as Thai culture was concerned. A well-known art historian has also noted the flourishing of art and architecture at Chiang Mai during the same period, attributing it to the impetus of Buddhism.[67] It appears that there existed a sense of regionalism during the reign of Tilôk. While Buddha statues of Sukhôthai still served as the genuine model for those cast at Chiang Mai, Sukhôthai script, which had originally been introduced by Sumanathera, founder of the Mon School, was rejected. Dr. Prasert na Nagara thinks that probably King Tilôk ordered the re-delimitation of all Chiang Mai monasteries and the destruction of stone inscriptions written in Sukhôthai script because these inscriptions contained land grants which were no longer valid.[68]

The religious texts of Lân-Nâ Thai still await systematic study. In 1915 George Coedès said that Pali works composed in Thailand were none too numerous, but Maung Daung Sayadaw U Pannasāmī, compiler of the Sāsanavamsa (1861), one of Burma's famous religious works, did cite at least five Pali works by the Chiang Mai monks as his authorities: Yânnawilât's Saṅkhayāpakāsaka, Sirimaṅgalathera's commentary on Yânnawilât's work, Uttrārāma's Visuddhimaggadīpanī, Sirimaṅgalathera's Maṅgalatthadīpanī, and an anonymous work, Uppātasaṅti.[69] Writing in 1920, Prince Damrong cited sixteen Pali texts of the North believed to be well-known works from Chiang Mai.[70]

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67) A.B. Griswold, Dated Buddha Images of Northern Siam, Artibus Asiae Supplementum XVI, 1957: 42-4

68) Prasert, op.cit.: 45

69) Coedès, "Notes": 39

70) Damrong, Prince, "Athibâi Rû'ang Châmmathéwîwong" (Introduction to the Cāmadevīvamsa) in Phôthirangsî, op.cit.: 11

We have now a better understanding of the quality and quantity of the Pali works of Chiang Mai. Although it is not possible to tell the age of the majority of manuscripts discovered in the recent survey, a break-down of these manuscripts into categories should give us some ideas of how the literature of Chiang Mai was influenced by Buddhist learning. The greatest number of the texts (2331) deal with jātaka stories; 483 with commentaries and sub-commentaries of the scriptures; 209 with story of sacred objects such as Buddha's relics, footprints, pagodas and Buddha images; 137 with the progress of Buddhism in Lân-Nâ Thai; 130 with the prophecy concerning the future decline of Buddhism; 80 with Buddhist cosmography and cosmogony; 59 with hagiography of prominent monks; and the rest with minor subjects.[71)]

Of all the well-known Pali scholars of Lân-Nâ Thai, Yânnakittithera of Wat Phanatsârâm, Chiang Mai, was perhaps the most respected writer. He had probably been to Ceylon to study Buddhism. We know from his works that he was King Tilôk's preceptor.[72)] Having composed twelve Pali works in between 1485 and 1500, he became the most prolific Pali scholar of his time. Some of his works are very impressive such as the Samantapāsādīka-Atthayojanā, a 1000-page long sub-commentary of the Tipitaka, and a treatise on Buddhaghosa's Atthasālinī.[73)] His other works are a series of grammatical exegeses of Buddha-

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71) Sommâi, op.cit.: 83

72) Likhit, op.cit.: 30; If Yânnakittithera was King Tilôk's preceptor, he must have been the same person as Yânnamongkhonthera, who acted as the king's preceptor when Tilôk became ordained in 1447. Coedès, "Documents": 110; Sèng, op.cit.: 126

73) Likhit, ibid.: 31; Saddhatissa, op.cit.: 213

ghosa's Commentaries (Atthakathās). But the ablest scholar must have been Sirimaṅgalathera, whose famous work, Maṅgalatthadīpanī (1524), has been acclaimed by a modern Pali scholar as "the best and most extensive exposition of the Maṅgala Sutta (Sutta-Nipāta) so far written in the Pali language".[74] He wrote the Vessantaradīpanī in 1517 and the Cakkavāladīpanī in 1520. Both of these two works are based on the Vessantara-jātaka and Agganna Sutta (Dīgha Nikāya), respectively.[75] There are some other monks, who achieved distinction in Pali literature. Dhammasenāpati, a native of Chiang Sèn, wrote a grammatical treatise called Padakkamayojana-Saddatthabhedacintā towards the end of the fifteenth century. Saddhammakitti, a Lamphûn monk and a friend of Yânnakitti's wrote a manual on Pali grammar entitled Saddhabindu-Abhinavadīkā.

Some of the interesting Pali works date from the first half of the sixteenth century. Yânnawilât, who was a native of Chiang Râi and said by the Jn to be one of those well-versed in the Tipitaka, composed the Saṅkhayapakāsaka in 1515.[76] Incidentally, this Pali work was translated into Burmese by a monk named Kavinda during the reign of Bodawpaya (1781-1819).[77] An anonymous work, Uppātasanti, was well-known in Burma for its magical power; the Sāsanavamsa relates that the army of the Emperor of China was defeated by the chanting of the 275 verses contained in this work.[78]

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74) Saddhatissa, ibid.: 217; Likhit, ibid.: 35
75) Saddhatissa, ibid.
76) ibid.: 217-8; Sèng, op.cit.: 138
77) Likhit, op.cit.: 40
78) ibid.: 41; Saddhatissa, op.cit.: 218

The Panyâtchâdok and Pathomsomphôthikathâ occupy a special place in the history of Pali literature in Thailand. The Panyât is a collection of the fifty extra-canonical jātakas, well-known in Laos, Burma, Cambodia and Siam. According to Prince Damrong, the 50-Jātakas had existed in ancient time in the form of local tales, but they were reproduced in the form of jātakas (Buddha's life and suffering in previous existences before he was finally reborn in this epoch as the enlightened one) by the Chiang Mai monks sometime between 1457 and 1657. Prince Damrong believed that the 50-Jātakas could have been written towards the end of this period when the standard of Pali had declined.[79] Saddhatissa, however, believes that these apocryphal jātakas were composed in hybrid Pali during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by an anonymous sāmanera (novice monk) resident in Chiang Mai.[80] In Laos they are known under the collective title of Lôkipanyâtchâdok,[81] but the title of the Burmese edition is Zimmé Paññāsa, which is a Burmese rendering of "Chiang Mai Paññāsa".[82] The true date of the 50-Jātakas is crucial to our understanding of the history of Thai literature as many stories from this unique collection were adapted as classical literature by the Siamese.[83] I believe that, by the beginning of the sixteenth century, the 50-Jātakas had already been well-known and popular, because the poets who composed the Thawâthotsamât Khlông Dan (Ayutthayan work of late C15th)[84] and the Nirât Hariphunchai (1516)[85]

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79) Damrong, op.cit.: 2
80) Saddhatissa, op.cit.: 221
81) ibid.
82) Dorothy Helen Fickle, An Historical and Structural Study of the Pannasa Jataka, Unpub. Ph.D. theis, University of Pennsylvania, 1978: 7-8 Damrong, op.cit.: 2
83) Schweisguth, op.cit.: 125-6

refer to episodes in the 50-Jātakas. It is not unlikely that these apocryphal jātakas were composed in the second half of the fifteenth century.

We do not have conclusive evidence to say when Pali culture began to decline in Lân-Nâ Thai. The Burmese intervention in 1558 may not have been the main factor. As a Buddhist centre, Chiang Mai stood high in the eyes of the Burmese kings. The great Bayinnaung forbade capture of prisoners of war when Chiang Mai fell into his hands, saying that it was the land whence Buddhism came to Burma.[86] He also commanded that land grants and dedications made by former kings of Chiang Mai should not be violated.[87] An inscription dated 1581 registers the donation of a big silver bowl and other things by Bayinnaung for the upkeep of Wat Chiang Man, which was originally built by King Mangrâi.[88] Prince Tharrawaddy, Bayinnaung's son, who ruled over Chiang Mai when Mangrâi's dynasty came to an end in 1578, was also anxious to promote Buddhism at Chiang Mai.[89] In fact one of the most outstanding Pali works, the Pathomsomphôthikathâ was written by Suwannarangsî, a Chiang Mai monk, as late as the 1580s.[90] It was

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84) Chanthit Kasèsin, (ed.), Thawâthotsamât Khlông Dan, Bangkok, 1969: 9-41; Chanthit believes that the author, Phra Yaowarât, was a son of Bǫrommatrailôk's; Cf. Schweisguth, ibid., who thinks that this poem was composed during Nârâi's reign.

85) Prasert na Nagara, (ed.), Khlông Nirât Hariphunchai, 3rd ed., Bangkok, 1973: stanzas 85, 174, and 175; pp. 85, 174, 175

86) U Tet Htoot, "The Nature of the Burmese Chronicles" in D.G.E. Hall, (ed.), Historians of South East Asia, 1961: 54fn.5; Nâi Thien, (tr.), "Burmese Invasions of Siam, translated from the Hmannan Yazawin Dawgyi", JSS, 5, 1 (1908): 16

87) PTLT/II: 210-1

88) PSč/III: No. 76, F.1/9-11/211

89) ibid.: No. 76, F.1/18-9/212

90) According to Coedès, "Notes": 41, the Pathomsomphôt's

original and served as a model for the Bangkok Prince-Monk Paramânuchit to write another work in Siamese of the same title in 1844.[91)]

III

"Kammatic" Buddhism, Monks and History

Buddhist believe in three basic principles, the impermanence of all things (aniccā), the working of doing-action (kamma), and the circle of unending rebirths (samsāra). These three qualities make up a life of suffering and the truth is that existence is painful, not merely in this existence, but any form of existence in the worlds of Buddhist cosmography. The best known exposition of Buddhist cosmography is the Téphûmikathâ or Traiphûm Phra Ruang, "Treatise on the Three Worlds", supposedly written by King Lithai of Sukhôthai in 1344.[92)] The Buddhist universe is divided into thirty-one levels. The highest world contains four levels of formless celestial beings (arūpa brahma) who have no need and no want, i.e. they have subdued all kinds of craving. The middle world contains sixteen levels inhabited by a lower class of celestial beings who are conditioned by form (rūpa brahma). They

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author and date of composition are not known, but it was definitely written by a Chiang Mai monk before the seventeenth century A.D. because it is cited in a C17th work called Culavamsa. Cf. Saddhatissa, op.cit.: 218

Likhit believes that Phra Suwannarangsî, who was later to become the Supreme Patriarch of Laos in the late sixteenth century A.D., is the author of this important Pali work. Phra Suwannarangsî wrote the Ganthābharanadikā in 1585. It is conceivable that he wrote the more well-known Pathomsomphôt in the same period. Likhit, op.cit.: 41

91) Likhit, ibid.; Saddhatissa, ibid.

92) Lithai, King, Traiphûm Phra Ruang, Khurusaphâ edition, 1963: 11; For a French translation, see: G. Coedès et

have attained a high level of spiritual achievement and acquired enough merit from their previous existences to be free from sensation and desire. The lowest world has eleven levels inhabited by beings who are conditioned by form and different degrees of sensation and desire. Mankind dwells in the fifth level; six levels above human beings are abodes of semi-celestial beings and celestial beings; four levels below human beings are sphere of various creatures, the lowest of which are hungry ugly spirits (peta).[93]

Buddhist believe so long as they are still roaming in the samsāra they are bound to move up and down the structure of the Three Worlds as described above. A prominent Burmese scholar, Taw Sein Ko, once aptly remarked:-

> "Buddhists are enjoined to look upon themselves not as members of a clan, tribe, or nation, but part of the universe, where allotment of conditions to mortals is proportionate to the amount of merit or demerit they may have acquired in their previous existence".[94]

When someone dies, the phrases yathākammam upāgami, and yathākammam gato are used to indicate how "he passed away according to his doing".[95] The verb gam is used with reference to the

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C. Archaimbault, Les Trois Mondes (Traibhūmi Brah Rvaṅ), vol. LXXXIV in Publications de l'École Française d'Extrême Orient, Paris, 1973; Note that the date 1344 has been challenged by Michael Vickery ("A Note on the Date of the Traibhūmikathā", JSS, 62, 2 (Jul. 1974): 173-83) who thinks that the Three Worlds was actually an Ayutthayan fake.

93) C.J. Reynolds, "Buddhist Cosmography in Thai History, with Special Reference to Nineteenth-Century Culture Change", JAS, 35, 2 (Feb. 1976): 204-5

94) Taw Sein Ko, Burmese Sketches, Rangoon: British Burma Press, 1913: 280

95) Wilhelm Geiger, Culture of Ceylon in Medieval Times, edited by Heinz Bechert, Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 1960: 182

five possible ways or forms of rebirth in hell, or as an animal, as a restless ghost (peta), as a man, or as a celestial being (deva).[96] The jātakas were written to demonstrate this point; Buddha had been reborn more than five hundred times as ascetic, robber chief, stag, deer, elephant, lion, king, etc., before he hoarded up a great store of merit in the process and was finally reborn in his last existence as the fourth Buddha of this world-system (kappa).

The Doctrine of Impermanence reminds Buddhists that what one has acquired, for instance, wealth, worldly possessions and even happy life, is only transistory. One cannot take these things into the next existence. Whether one is to be reborn at a higher level in the Buddhist universe depends on the total sum of one's good or bad doing-actions (kusalakamma or akusalakamma). At the same time, the present conditions of life of the individual are to be explained in terms of the aggregate of his kamma in the previous life. The ultimate goal of Buddhists is to attain the nibbāna (Sans. nirvāna, "state of being extinguished") and the destruction of the khandha or the five elements -rūpa, "form", vedanā, "feeling", sannā, "perception", saṅkhāra, "impulse and emotion", vinnāna, "sense awareness"- which make up a "person". One is taught to discern the emptiness of self and the vanities of life. The more one can insulate oneself from wealth the better chance one has of a rebirth in a higher plane of the universe.

When King Lithai was ordained as monk by a mahāsāmī, (senior monk) who was invited from Ceylon for this purpose in

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96) ibid.

1361, he announced his intention that:-

> ...In return for the merit
> acquired because I have been ordained in the religion
> of the Buddha, the Exalted One, I
> have no wish for the treasure of a cakravartin,
> or that of an Indra, or that of a Brahma. I
> have a resolution. I wish earnestly
> to become a Buddha so as to lead all creatures
> across the samsāra of the Three Worlds...[97]

The influence of Buddhist doctrines is apparent in the historical writing of Theravāda countries as monks were the traditional intellectual élite. They would see past events in terms of moral lessons. The purpose of history in the tamnân tradition is clearly explained by the following statement:-

> Monks are forbidden by Buddha to indulge in idle talk
> on stories of kings, robbers, ministers, and generals,
> as indulgence in such idle talk is not conducive to
> spiritual development. But the commentary adds that
> if such stories are treated as themes showing the im-
> permanence of all things -how even mighty kings cannot
> escape death- then it is permissible to indulge in such
> talk. Although the original injunction of the Buddha
> and the commentarial interpretation of it is meant for
> monks, not only Burmese monks but Burmese laymen as
> well take the interpretation of the commentary as their
> moral justification to write their chronicles.[98]

There was perhaps a common sense of urgency in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to halt the decline of Buddhism that gave an impetus to the writing of tamnân. An extra-canonical sutta, the Metteyyasutta tells of the future Buddha,

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97) PSč/I: No. 4, F.2/48-51/83; Cf. Griswold & Prasert, "The Epigraphy of Mahādhammarājā I of Sukhodaya: Epigraphic and Historical Studies No. 11, Part I", JSS, 61, 1 (Jan. 1973): 142-3

98) U Tet Htoot, op.cit.: 50

Metteyya, who is to be born as the fifth and last Buddha of our world-system. This text cites Gotama, the most recent and present Buddha, as predicting that his religion will last only 5,000 years before it comes to an end. It further describes the progressive deterioration of the Dispensation of the Buddha and the scriptures, and the general reassembly of the relics after 5,000 years.[99] In one of King Lithai's inscriptions, the concern for this "fact" is genuinely expressed:-

> ...If anyone asks
> "How long the religion of Lord Buddha
> comes to an end?" Let this be the answer,
> "After the enshrinement of this great relic,
> there still remain three thousand
> and ninety-nine years." Furthermore, in ninety-
> nine years counting from the enshrinement
> of this relic until the Year of the Pig, all
> the Tipitaka will disappear. Then no one will truly
> understand the scriptures. Those who know
> the Tipitaka, will know it only slightly. The
> sermons such as the Mahâchât will find no one
> able to chant them. Other jātakas will no longer
> be complete...[100]

According to this inscription, the great relic was enshrined when 3099 years still remain of the Religion, that is in the year 1901 B.E. (A.D. 1357). Lithai prophesied that in in a Pig year, 99 years from the enshrinement of the relic, that is 2000 B.E. (1901+99, = A.D. 1456), Buddhism would start the beginning of its gradual decline.

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99) Saddhatissa, "Pali Literature from Laos" in A.K. Narain, (ed.), Studies in Pali & Buddhism, A Memorial Volume in Honour of Bhikkhu Jagdish Kashyap, Delhi, 1979: 328

100) PSč/I: No. 3, F.1/31-8/63; Cf. Griswold & Prasert, op.cit.: 98-9

The significance of the year 2000 B.E. in the Tai world may have come from Lithai's prophecy. It is described as a crisis point in human history in the popular beliefs of the Tai Yuan, the Lao, and the Siamese. Phra Phôthirangsî, composer of the Pali work, Sihiṅganidāna, "Tamnân Phra Sihing", believed that in 2000 B.E. a certain Phrayâ Thammikarât would rule in Ceylon and take away the Sihing "Lion" image from Chiang Mai, implying that Buddhism would not be flourishing there, and the city would no more be worth the presence of such an important image.[101] The anonymous work entitled Phlengyâo Phayâkǫn Krung Sî Ayutthayâ, "A Ditty Prophesying the Fall of Ayutthayâ" was perhaps written in the late Ayutthayâ period, as Prince Damrong has suggested,[102] but its theme must have been a recurrent one. It describes the decline of Buddhism and many freak omens before the city would fall in the year 2000. Prince Damrong dismissed it as a Buddhist Era date, because Ayutthayâ fell to the Burmese in B.E. 2310. But his attempt to explain it as a Chunlasakkarât (+ 638 = A.D.) or Mahâsakkarât (+ 78 = A.D.) seems beside the point.[103]

The prophecy of King Lithai concerning the disappearance of important religious texts and the general deterioration of Buddhism may have had a part to play in the rise of the Siṅhalese School in Chiang Mai and its attempt to reverse the process of decay. It was customary for the phûriang (compiler) of a tamnân to remind his listeners or readers of how long

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101) Phôthirangsî, Phra, Tamnân Phra Phuttha Sihing, translated from the Pali text, Sihiṅganidana, into Siamese by Phrayâ Pariyat (Phè Tâlalak) in 1906, Bangkok, Cremation volume for the funeral of Somdet Phrachâo Phîyâther Châofâ Krom-maluang Lopburî Râmet, 1932: 7

102) PP/63, Khurusaphâ edition, vol. 37: 128

103) ibid.

the religion had passed and how much longer it would survive.[104] By writing a tamnân history, and pointing out to the public the importance of Buddhism, the compiler believed he had acquired a great deal of merit. But it was a kind of merit or wisdom that had to be shared with mankind. Thus, the co-authors of MS/SD made it clear in the colophon of their work that:-

> This History of the Buddha's Religion is written by us, Phra Phutthaphukâm and Phra Phutthayân, so that it will remain sacred for all good people. May all laymen and those ordained alike observe the righteous paths as did the enlightened ones. Doing so, may they hope to enjoy the three kinds of happiness, which has the nibbāna as the most coveted.[105]

In certain cases, a tamnân writer would regard his text as sacred, and like the jātakas, many tamnân were used for sermons.[106] The idea that tamnân were sacred seems to have derived from the custom of enshrining the Tipitaka in the monastery or a Buddhist's house. Possibly, only a few laymen could understand the actual content of the Tipitaka, although they know it as sacred. In every-day life, tamnân histories compensated for the Buddhist scriptures' unintelligibility by citing Buddha's life stories and teaching in parables. In the more solemn of cases, it was sufficient to show one's respect for the scriptures in a simple way. As a Burmese scholar observed: "In lieu of transcribing the entire Tipitaka on stone or metal enshrining it in a Pagoda, the Buddhists have a custom of having only three scripts made, namely, of the opening

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104) Nâttawiphâ Chalitânon, Prawattisât Niphon Thai, "History of Thai Historiography", Bangkok, 1981: 112-3

105) MS/SD: 337

106) Thammarâchânuwat, Phra, "Introduction to Tamnân Phrathât Chọ Hè" in PTLT/II: 411

lines of the Sutta, Vinaya, and Abhidhamma."[107] But instead of enshrining the tamnân text in a pagoda, the phûriang would expect only that his text would be read by the public. Provided his tamnân account was used as a means of propagating the Religion, his store of merit would be replenished. To achieve this aim, some compilers would go so far as to say that their works were to be treated with reverence. One compiler even declared that: "The text I have written down -/do take my word for it/- will last to the very end of the Buddha's Religion. Do not let anyone violate them".[108]

Another phûriang also emphasized the sacrosanct aspect of his tamnân history, in which good laymen could find refuge, in this persuasive manner:-

> This, the Tamnân Phrathât Chao Doi Tung, which recounts the story since the time of Mahâkassapathera, a monk of great intellect and miraculous powers, has been compiled by me for the respect and worship of all men and deities including Indra, Brahma, religious men of all persuasions, rulers and noblemen, ministers and commoners. Anyone who listens to it /in a religious sermon service/, copies it, or worships it will reap as much benefit as he who pays homage to the Buddha's relics. Anyone who enshrines it in his dwelling-place will always be safe from all kinds of disaster and danger.[109]

The most popular form of tamnân writing is the so-called tamnân phrathât, "History of a Reliquary". A custom in Lân-Nâ Thai helped perpetuate the writing of this kind of tamnân until the 1940s. It has been a custom among the people of

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107) Taw Sein Ko, Burmese Sketches, volume II, Rangoon, 1920: 260-1
108) "Tamnân Wat Suan Dok Mâi" in PTLT/II: 209
109) PTLT/II: 409-10

Chiang Mai, Chiang Râi, and some other places to associate themselves with a specific reliquary. A person born in a Bull year will pay homage to the Phrathât Lampâng Luang, "Great Reliquary of Lampâng"; those who were born in a Tiger year will make offerings at Phrathât Chọ Hè, Nân; those who were born in a Horse year will choose to worship at the Phrathât Dọi Suthep, Chiang Mai.[110] The faithful monk would do his best to convince his readers and listeners that the phrathât whose story he was writing did contain a genuine Buddha relic, which had been encased and deposited there since the time of the great Indian king, Aśoka.

IV

The Tamnân Format:
The Great Themes and Local History

A modern writer, who shows a great interest in Buddhism and the life of Buddha, comments that the story of Buddha is "suspended between little history and much myth".[111] The story is usually told with miracles at the beginning and miracles at the end. It has, he observes, "a historical form, a legendary form and a mythical form".[112] This is relevant to the writing of tamnân history and Buddhist legends because it seems that the less resemblance there is to real life, the more the fantasies will appeal to religious credulity. The mythologization of Buddha's life had already been a feature of Ceylon's religious writings in the fifth century A.D.

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110) Thammarâchânuwat, op.cit.: 412
111) Michael Pye, The Buddha, London: Duckworth, 1979: 4
112) ibid.

From around the eleventh century A.D. onwards, the religious tradition of Ceylon had begun to be transmitted to Burma through the efforts of King Anawrahta (1044-77) of Pagan. The first essay in Pali scholarship, a grammatical work called Kārikā, is reckoned to have been written by Dhammasenāpati of Pagan in 1064.[113] Other monks, thanks to the direct religious intercourse between Ceylon and Pagan, were free to travel to Ceylon and study Buddhism. In form as well as in spirit, these monks adhered strictly to their ancient masters' masterpieces when they produced religious works of their own. This included the religious chronicles.

Strictly speaking, a religious chronicle, in Theravāda conception, must be written in the "blameless Māgadhi" or Pali language.[114] Its content has to be well-compartmented. The model for a religious chronicle was set by Mahānāma who translated an earlier prose chronicle (Porānatthakathā) in Siñhalese into Pali in about the sixth century A.D. Mahānāma's work is called Mahāvamsa or "Great Chronicle" not only due to the fact that it is the chronicle of great kings or teachers but also because it deals with great themes.[115] The great themes are of course conceived in the Buddhist tradition: Buddhist cosmogony, the Buddha's life-story from the dawn of humankind until his birth, enlightenment, and nibbāna, the first three Buddhist Councils, the Buddha's prophecy of the coming of Buddhism to Ceylon and countries in the east. Then the ordinary themes or local legend and tradition are put in in order to fulfil

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113) Bode, op.cit.: 15

114) This was a tradition set by Mahānāma, compiler of the Atthakathā-Mahāvamsa, around the sixth century A.D.; See B.C. Law, On the Chronicles of Ceylon, 1947: 10

115) ibid.

Buddha's prophecy. One religious chronicle would focus its attention upon a hero king who is presented as champion of Buddhism. The Mahāvamsa has as its central character, Duttha-gāmanī, the Ceylonese king who patronized a Buddhist Council in 80 B.C. when the scriptures were written in Pali for the first time. The Culavamsa, a sequel to the Mahāvamsa, has Parakkamabāhu as champion of Buddhism.[116]

In general, the tamnân both in Thai and Pali were written according to the Mahāvamsa model. Rattanapanyâ's Jinakālamālī, the most respected religious chronicle ever written by a Tai monk, centres upon the religious activities of the kings of Chiang Mai, but with special reference to Tilôk, who supported the Siñhalese School. The Cāmadevīvamsa emphasizes the rôle, not of Queen Châmmathéwî, but of Âthittarât whose career is claimed to have been foretold by the Buddha himself. It appears that originally the Cāmadevīvamsa had been a separate tamnân,[117] but it was incorporated by the author of MS/SD into their "universal"-history scheme. On the other hand, Phôthirangsî's Cāmadevīvamsa in Pali, and Tamnân Lamphûn were taken out of the episodes in MS/SD.[118] The last universal history in the mould of the Mahāvamsa and Jn was written in 1789 by Phra Wimonlatham, the greatest historian of the Bangkok period. This Pali work, Saṅgītiyavamsa, is based in part on an earlier version of the Ayutthayâ period -perhaps a religious chronicle in Siamese- and it must have been the same one

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116) ibid.: 12

117) It is worth noting that the compiler of the Tamnân Nâng Châmmathéwîwong written in Thai Yuan does not mention Âthittarât at all, despite the fact that Âthittarât proves to be an historical personage, while Châmmathéwî does not. PTLT/I: "Tamnân Nâng Châmmathéwî": 1-30

118) There is no doubt that the Tamnân Lamphûn is a reproduc-

as that used by Jeremias van Vliet in his Short History of the Kings of Siam (1640). This religious chronicle of Ayutthayâ must have originated outside the court. Jeremias van Vliet indicates that he gained access to his sources of Siamese history through monks.[119] The religious approach to the past is quite evident in the chronicle part of the Short History. One may assume that the Ayutthayan saṅgha had its own religious tamnân and an historical tradition which was different from the archive-based phongsâwadân written by court historiographers. But when the Saṅgīti/1789 was brought up to date by Phra Wimonlatham in 1789, its compiler wanted to follow in Rattanapanyâ's footstep and produce a monumental work. The purpose of Phra Wimonlatham was to extol Râmâ I and his brother, the Prince of the Front Palace, as champion of Buddhism who had restored peace and harmony in the Siamese kingdom after the Burmese sack of Ayutthayâ in 1767.

Almost as a matter of fact, two-thirds of a religious tamnân is devoted to the narration of Buddhist legends. If we take the Jinakālamālī as a classic tamnân, we can describe its outline as consisting of six major topics; an invocation of the Triple Gem is followed by

(1) The sixfold antecedent (Chabbidhanidāna) which deals with the life of the Buddha commencing with the mental resolve (manopanidāna) of the Bodhisattva (embryo Buddha) and ending with Buddha's parinibbāna. A description of relics is included together with a summary of the twenty-four Buddhas preceding

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tion of MS/SD as its compiler acknowledges this fact. The copy is almost verbatim, for example, see TL: 26, MS/SD: 165; TL: 35, MS/SD: 183-4; TL: 55, MS/SD: 214
For TL see C. Notton, Annales du Siam, II, Paris, 1930

119) See Chapter II, pp. 176-7

Gotama. The origin of preceding Buddhas is traced back into the distant past which lies beyond human experience but a length of which is measurable in terms of the Buddhist unit of cosmic time, kappa.[120]

(2) A brief description of the first three Councils, which took place in India.

(3) The history of Buddhism in Ceylon from its introduction up to the arrival of the Tooth Relic in c.256 B.C.

(4) The political and religious history of Hariphunchai from its establishment by Queen Châmmathéwî, who came from Lopburî, up to its annexation by King Mangrâi in 1292.

(5) The history of Chiang Mai from the time of Mangrâi, the twenty-third successor of the royal line of Lawačhangkarât (Lâo Chok), ruler of Yônnarat (Chiang Râi/Chiang Sèn/Phayao region). Having defeated the last king of Hariphunchai, Mangrâi is described as having been "the victor, who raised the white parasol over Yônnarat and Hariphunchai".[121] This section deals with Chiang Mai's leading rôle as a Buddhist centre and the introduction of Siñhalese Buddhism into Tai and neighbouring countries.

(6) The arrival of the Sinhalese Dispensation and the account of its establishment by Mahādhammagambīra or Yânnakhamphî of MS/PD. The last two sections comprise, in effect, a political and religious history of Chiang Mai.

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120) A kappa is the duration of time which elapses between the origin and the destruction of a world-system. Some say that it lasts 1,344,000 years, others reckon 1,280,000,000 years, and no general agreement has been arrived at. Edward Conze, Buddhism: its Essence and Development, Harper Torchbooks, 1975: 49

121) Coedès, "Documents": 89; Sèng, op.cit.: 104

Jn's tamnân structure reflects the attempt to link the Buddhism of Chiang Mai to its birthplace, India. The "great themes" and local history become merged when the compilers discuss the arrival of Buddhism at Lamphûn. Buddha is said in MS/SD to have predicted by virtue of his omniscience that:-

> Tathāgata (We) having attained the nibbāna for 1008 years, a great city called Hariphunchai will rise among other principalities. Our Religion will have been prospering there. Our relic will be deposited in that city for the benefit of all men.[122)]

This prophecy foretells the discovery and the building of the Great Reliquary of Lamphûn by the Mon king, Athittarât (or Athitčharât) in the eleventh century A.D. Jn recounts the prophecy without giving any date.[123)] The figure 1008 is likely to be a scribal error for 1000 as tamnân writers were inclined towards round figures, especially when describing important but undated events.

There is a subtle difference between the MS/SD and Jn in the treatment of standard Buddhist history. MS/SD ends the customary introduction at the despatching of Buddhist missionaries abroad to propagate the religion following the Third Council, which was sponsored by King Aśoka. This is immediately followed by the description of the history of Hariphunchai. Jn continues to describe at some length the propagating effort of Mahindrathera and the arrival of Buddhism in Ceylon before turning to the history of Hariphunchai. MS/SD was written by monks of the Mon School, Phra Phutthayân, abbot of Wat Suan Dok (1418-29), and Phra Phutthaphukâm. Griswold and Prasert

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122) MS/SD: 337

123) Coedès, op.cit.: 84-5; Sèng, op.cit.: 100

believe MS/SD was begun by Phra Phutthayân in the 1420s and finished by Phra Phutthaphukâm sometime after 1500, which is the last entry to the text (C.S. 872).[124] This represents an interval of some 80 years whereas the colophon apparently suggests they were not only men of the same generation but were also collaborators in producing MS/SD. Furthermore, the colophon of MS/SD mentions the name of Phra Phutthaphukâm first and then that of Phra Phutthayân, implying in the saṅgha hierarchy that the former had seniority over the latter. According to Tamnân Wat Bupphârâm Suan Dọk Mâi, the abbot of that monastery between 1457 and 1475 also had a monastic title "Phutthayân".[125] As for Phra Phutthaphukâm we can have even less doubt. He is called Mahâsîlathéwa in TWBSDM, but was generally known as Mahâphukâm, owing to the fact that he had studied the Buddhist scriptures in Pagan for ten years. He was renowned for his knowledge of the twenty-eight Buddhist reliquaries in Chiang Mai. He had resided at Wat Suan Dọk for some years, but later left for the tranquillity of the forest reportedly in 1500.[126] Phra Phutthayân (II) may have been responsible for part of the work before he died in 1475, but it was completed by Phra Phutthaphukâm in the early sixteenth century.[127] The omission of the Buddhist phase in Ceylon by the authors of the MS/SD could be deliberate so as not to emphasize the legitimate claim of succession by the

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124) MS/SD: 260; A.B. Griswold & Prasert na Nagara, "King Lödaiya of Sukhodaya and His Contemporaries", JSS, 60, 1 (Jan. 1972): 53fn.2
125) PTLT/II: 286
126) ibid.: 194
127) This is based on the assumption that Phutthayân (II) and Phutthaphukâm were contemporaries.

"Siñhalese" monks. Rattanapanyâ, compiler of Jn, presented the case of the Siñhalese School in opposition to MS/SD with some abrasiveness:

> "This, the Treatise on the Epoch of the Conqueror /Jinakalamali/ narrates for all men the brief stories which I have wished to tell, and which are not injurious to anyone".[128]

This statement has best to be construed as meaning that rival works of the Jn were in some way harmful to general readers.

The less ambitious tamnân writers would skip over the Buddhavamsa or story of Buddha's life, and begin with an invocation to the Triple Gem followed by a scene in which the Buddha is said to be residing in the forest near Phârânasî (Banares). Comtemplating and using his omniscient power, Buddha sees into the future and knows where his religion will be established. Buddha flies to the selected places and leaves his relics there, making a prophecy for each place in the presence of his personal attendant, Phra Anon (Ananda). This technique was by no means novel, but had been used effectively by the ancient masters to write the jātakas. In the jātakas, Buddha would overhear the conversation of his disciples about a certain incident involving a certain person. Buddha would smile and the monks ask him the reason why. Buddha then explains the cause of that incident in terms of the past, namely, one reaps the benefit of the aggregate of kamma in the previous existence.[129] In the tamnân, the time ahead of Buddha is explained in terms of the present, because if Buddha has pre-

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128) Sèng, op.cit.: 171

129) John Garrett Jones, Tales and Teachings of the Buddha: The Jātaka Stories in Relation to the Pali Canon, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1979: 15

dicted something, it is bound to happen to fulfil the prophecy. A tradition in Siam maintained that Thâo U-Thọng (Râmâthibọdî, founder of Ayutthayâ) had originally been a tiny ant that showed itself before the eyes of Buddha, when he arrived at the district of Nọng Sanô.[130] The Tamnân Mû'ang Fâng would have its readers believe that King Kâwila (1782-1813) of Chiang Mai had been a demon (yaksa), but because the demon had listened to the Buddha's sermon, had been reborn as king.[131]

V

The Tamnân Geography

A strange feature of the Lân-Nâ Thai tamnân is the localization of the concept of Jambudīpa. In Buddhist cosmology, Jambudīpa is one of the four continents of the universe. It is situated to the south in relation to other continents: Amaragoyāna (west), Utarakaru (north), and Pubbavideha (east). At the beginning of a world-system, the whole universe was engulfed in a conflagration. The great fire destroyed everything from the lowest world up to the Aphatsarâ (Pal. ābhassarā) level of the world of celestial beings (brahma). The conflagration was then followed by a great flood which inundated the universe up to the Supphakinhâ (subhakinahā) level of the world of celestial beings. When the flood had receeded, five lotuses grew up from the ground in the middle of the Jambudīpa,

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130) Fine Arts Department, Bangkok, Khamhaikân Chão Krung Kao, "Testimony of the Citizens of Old Ayutthayâ", 2nd ed., 1925: 48-9

131) Sommâi Premčhit and Phuangkham Tuikhiaw, (eds), Tamnân Mû'ang Fâng, Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology, Chiang Mai University, 1976: 15

symbolizing the five Buddhas who would be inbited to descend from heaven and be reborn as human beings so that they could preach a great enlightening sermon to humankind, and bring them across the sea of transmigrations.[132)]

The mythical significance of Jambudīpa lies in the fact it is reckoned the birth-place of the five Buddhas -the four already descended, and the fifth, Metteyya, yet to descend after the religion established by Gotama Buddha has ended in B.E. 5000. The usual equation of Jambudīpa is with India because Gotama Buddha was born, attained enlightenment, and entered the parinibbāna in India. But by the eleventh century A.D., Buddhism had virtually disappeared from the Indian states, and the historical "Jambudīpa" no longer existed, and Buddhist scholars were subsequently forced to flee before the Muslim invaders to the countries of South-East Asia.[133)] When Theravada Buddhism was adopted by the Mon and Burman ruling class in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the concept of Jambudīpa was thought of in two ways. First, it was the land where Buddhism prospered; thus South-East Asia is generally described in the Mon/Burman religious tradition not just as an extension of India, but as "Jambudīpa" itself. Second, Jambudīpa, as the seat of a cakkavatti (Sans. cakravartin), "Universal Monarch", is theoretically tied to the Buddhist notion of ideal kingship;

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132) For a tamnân view of the universe see: Camille Notton, (tr.), Annales du Siam, I: "Chronique de Suvaṇṇa K'ôm Kham", Paris, 1926: 81-93; "Tamnân Mû'ang Suwanna Khôm Kham" in PP/72, Khurusaphâ edition, vol. 45: 134-51

133) J. Filliozat, "Emigration of Indian Buddhists to Indo-China c.A.D. 1200" in K.S. Lal, (ed.), Studies in Asian History, New Delhi: Indian Council for Cultural Relations, 1969: 45-8

only the righteous king (dhammarāja) is entitled to rule Jambudīpa. Available data would suggest that King Narapatisithu (1173-1210) was the first Burman king who claimed to reside on top of Jambudīpa.[134] Epigraphic evidence dating from the twelfth century A.D. gives the name "Arimaddanapura", which is situated in the middle of the mythical Jambudīpa, to Pagan, the capital of the Burmese kingdom. It is conceivable that in Burman/Mon historiography, "Jambudīpa" had been used to mean South-East Asia since the twelfth century A.D. This tradition was bequeathed to the Tai Yuan of Chiang Mai at a later date.

According to Buddhist legends, King Aśoka ordered that 84,000 pagodas be built in his vast empire to house the 84,000 volumes of the scriptures. A tamnân writer would convince his readers that his subject pagoda dated from the time of Aśoka because Phingkharat Chiang Mai was presented as part of Jambudīpa.

As already mentioned, Chiang Mai evolved in the cultural orbit of Burmese Pagan and Mon Hariphunchai. The acceptance of Burman/Mon historical tradition was bound to come about, given that religious contact between Chiang Mai and Pagan had long been close and cordial. We can certainly see that right at the peak of Chiang Mai civilization, tamnân writers were still preserving Burman/Mon religious tradition which included the use of the Burmese Era (Chunlasakkarât) and the Jambudīpa geography. In contrast to the other two Tai polities, Sukhôthai and Ayutthayâ, the Tai Yuan had adopted the Burmese Era

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134) Michael Aung Thwin, "Jambudīpa: Classical Burma's Camelot", CAS, 16 (1981): 60fn.10

(C.S.) alongside the sixty-year cycle which had been the traditional Tai dating system from the beginning. The inscription of Wat Phra Yün erected in 1370 uses the Sukhôthai script introduced by Sumanathera, but retains the Burmese Era. The Sukhôthai inscriptions by contrast use the Mahâsakkarât (M.S.); only four inscriptions dated A.D. 1392, 1404 (2), and 1406 express the date in C.S.,[135] the first of which also gives the M.S. date (1314). The inscription of 1392 contains the oath of amity between the king of Sukhôthai and the prince of Nân Nân was an independent city-state on the fringe of Sukhôthai and Chiang Mai, but it may have used the C.S. era like Chiang Mai. At Ayutthayâ, the use of M.S. era was consistent until the Burmese imposed their C.S. era after they had subjugated Ayutthayâ in 1569, and the last Ayutthayan inscription to have been dated in M.S. is the inscription of Dân Sâi of 1563.

The origin of a second "India" was deep-rooted in the early Indianized states of South-East Asia. Judging from epigraphic evidence, a number of Indian Brahman priests had settled down in South-East Asia and served in the royal courts. It was they who had brought about the realization of classical India in South-East Asia. The first waves of Indianization brought back to life the names of Sri Kśetra, Kamboja, Champa, and Dvāravatī. These early kingdoms existed in modern Burma, Cambodia, central Vietnam, and Thailand respectively in between the third and eleventh century A.D. The names of these "classical" Indian kingdoms were borrowed apparently at will. When

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135) PSč/I: No. 9 (1406): 121-6; No. 10 (1404): 129-33
PSč/III: No. 45 (1392): 62-7; No. 46 (1404): 71-3

Chou Ta-kuan visited Angkor in 1296, he wrote a careful account of the Khmer kingdom. Introducing the country he said:-

> Le Tchen-la 眞臘 est aussi appelé Tchan-la 占臘 Le nom indigène est Kan-po-tche 甘孛智 La dynastie actuelle, se basant sur les livres religieux si-fan 西番 , appelle ce pays Kan-p'ou-tche 澉浦只, qui est phonétiquement proche de Kan-po-tche.[136]

According to Chou Ta-kuan, the name adopted by the Khmer kings for their country was unmistakably Kan-po-tche, a Chinese rendering of "Kamboja". But the term Kan-p'ou-tche is also given, and it could be rendered only as "Kambuja" or "Kambhuja". Chou Ta-kuan explained that "Kan-p'ou-tche" (Kambuja) derived its origin from the religious texts of the Tibetans (si-fan) who practised Mahāyānist Buddhism and employed Sanskrit, not Pali, as the sacred language. Chou Ta-kuan seems to have been confused by the similarity of the terms Kambuja (Angkorian Empire) and Kamboja (Lawô, Lopburî). The term "Kambuja" (born of Kambu; Kambu, being a mythical ṛsī), according to M. Vickery, was used in Angkor epigraphy from the reign of Indravarman I (877-89) and "is most likely a contrived etymology from an indigenous ethnic term such as khmu or khmer".[137] Kamboja, on the other hand, was one of the sixteen janapada, "great cities" of Buddhist India, and thus an extraneous tradition in South-East Asia. The two terms have become conflated because of the phonetic shift

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136) Chou Ta-kuan, "Mémoires sur les coutumes du Cambodge", tr. & ed. P. Pelliot, BEFEO, 2, 2 (avr.-jui. 1904): 137

137) M. Vickery, Cambodia after Angkor, the Chronicular Evidence for the Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries, vol. I, Unpub. Ph.D. Thesis, Yale University, 1977: 370

that could easily occur in Pali and Sanskrit, especially between the vowels 'o' and 'u'. It is not impossible that, as Chou Ta-kuan did not talk about Lawô (Lopburî), Chen-la or "Kan-po-tche" in his Mémoires could have meant Lopburî,[138] and not Angkor.

A common feature of Burman/Mon and Tai religious chronicles is the superimposition of Buddhist India upon mainland South-East Asia. The concept of Buddhist India or Jambudīpa was revitalized by the Mahāvamsa in the twelfth century A.D., and the Burmese model was transmitted to the Mon, the Tai of Upper Burma and Lân-Nâ Thai, and the Chinese. Certain problems arose because some ancient place-names of Buddhist India had already been adopted for South-East Asia. Consequently, Jambudīpa had to be applied to Burma, Thailand, Laos, and Yunnan quite loosely.

The transference of Jambudīpa from India to South-East Asia represented a modification of the Mahāvamsa model, especially in the treatment of the Buddhist missions despatched overseas by Moggaliputratissathera, chairman of the Third Buddhist Council. The Mahāvamsa lists these countries: Majjhantika was sent to propagate the Religion in Kassmīranagara and Gandhāra, that is Kashmir and the northwest region of Aśoka's empire; Mahādeva was sent to Mahismandala, i.e. Maisūr (Mysore) proper in the south; Rakkhita to Vanavāsa in the northern part of Kannada; Dhammarakkhita, a Greek monk, to Aparāntaka to the west of Gujerat; Mahādhammarakkhita to the southwest; Mahārakkhita to Yona, i.e. the Greek country; Majjhima to the Himalaya regions; Sona and Uttara to Suvannabhumi, "Land of

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138) See also fn. 32 above

Gold"; and Mahinda to Laṅkā, i.e. Ceylon.[139]

The MS/SD, which is the earliest religious tamnân of Chiang Mai, evidently preserves the Burman/Mon innovations. It does not list all the missions sent from Aśoka's capital, but mentions only those countries supposed to be South-East Asia. Mahāthera Majjhantika was sent to Gandhāra to the "northeast" of Jambudīpa; Mahāyonakathera to Parāntakajanapada, that is Pagan;[140] Mahādhammarakkhitathera to "our Yonaka country"; and Sona and Uttara to Suvannabhumī, "namely Phakhô (Pegu)".[141] The list of MS/SD does not agree with the Mahāvamsa, especially with regard to Ganhāra and Yonaka. If the Burmese placed Pagan in the centre of Jambudīpa, the logical location of Gandhāra should be in the northwest as clearly stated by the Mahāvamsa. But the equation of Gandhāra with Yunnan must have been well accepted not later than the thirteenth century. P. Pelliot places Gandhāra from Chinese texts in the valley of Tali.[142] In Tai tamnân Gandhāra is less frequently used than Magadha, Videha, or Rājagariha, to refer to Yunnan; the placing of the last three to the northeast of Pagan is quite close to the classical Buddhist geography.

The equation by the authors of MS/SD of Suvannabhumi with Phakhô (Pegu) in Lower Burma agrees with the Mon belief as manifested in the Kalyānī inscription erected in 1476 by Dhammacheti (Râmâthibodî), king of Pegu. Basing their analysis on the Burman/Mon tradition of the fifteenth century,

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139) Jean Filliozat, "Aśoka et l'expansion bouddhique", Présence du Bouddhisme, France-Asie publication, 1959: 371

140) MS/SD: 67 141) ibid.: 68

142) Pelliot, "Deux itinéraires": 161

Western scholars have tended to believe that the two Buddhist missionaries, Sona and Uttara, landed in Lower Burma.[143] In fact, Suvannabhumi is mentioned in the Râmkhamhèng inscription of 1292?, or nearly two centuries before the Kalyānī inscription. The place-names related to "Land of Gold" on the Suphanburî-Thâčhîn river-system west of modern Bangkok are unique to the ancient Mon-controlled area: Âng Thong means "Basin of Gold"; Ū Thong, "Cradle of Gold"; Kânčhanaburî, "City of Gold"; and Suphanburî, "City of Gold". Perhaps the ancient Mon kingdom of Dvāravatī with its centres at Ū Thong and Nakhon Pathom might have regarded itself as the "Land of Gold" of King Aśoka's Buddhist India. The Suvannabhumi of C15th-Burman/Mon tradition that equated it with Pegu was created by scholar-monks in Burma to fill in the Buddhist map.

The existence of two Kambojas in the early South-East Asian historiography has been pointed out and explained in some detail by Michael Vickery.[144] The first Kamboja is of course the classical name of the Angkorean Empire, and perhaps equally of the Lopburî region, and it is the origin of the modern word "Cambodia". The second Kamboja was unquestionably an innovation of the Shan (Tai in Burma) who had borrowed a classical name of Buddhist India for themselves. I am as yet to come across a tamnân history written in Lân-Nâ Thai which refers to any Tai principality in Upper Burma as Kamboja. Nevertheless, the Chronicle of Tagaung calls the earliest Tai kingdom in Burma by the name of Kamboja.[145] According to J.G. Scott,

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143) Jean Filliozat, op.cit.
144) Vickery, op.cit.: 369-71
145) G.H. Luce and Pe Maung Tin, (trs), "Chronicle of the City of Tagaung", JBRS, 11, 1 (1921): 29, 35

who translated a Sèn Wî chronicle in 1901, the official name of the state of South Sèn Wî was "Siriwilât Mahâ Kamboja Saṅghī Kôsamphî".[146] This high-sounding name does not make sense as both Kamboja and Kôsamphî (Kōsambī) were two different states in ancient India.

What puzzle readers of Northern Tai tamnân most are the occasional references to Kamboja in the Pali chronicles and "Khǫm" in the Tai Yuan chronicles. The traditional equation of Kamboja with Angkor was once universally accepted. The "Khǫm"= Khmer equation in the Lân-Nâ Thai tradition, however, is misleading and needs some clarifications. The authors of Jn and Cāmadevīvamsa talk of a war between the two Mǫn centres, Hariphuchai and Lawô towards the end of the tenth century. In the midst of the conflict, the ruler of Sirithammanakhǫn (Nakhǫn Sîthammarât) came with his fleet and successfully captured Lopburî.[147] The Jn calls the new ruler of Lopburî "Kamboja", and says that he waged an unsuccessful war against Hariphunchai, but apparently, his army drove refugees from "Syāmadesa" into the Mǫn kingdom of Thaton (Suthammawadî) in Lower Burma. The equation of Kamboja = Lopburî, and not Angkor means that we will have to forsake Coedès' old theory concerning the emergence of Suryavarman I (1002-50) at Angkor at the beginning of the eleventh century A.D.[148]

Both the religious chronicles of Chiang Mai and Burman/Mǫn epigraphy and chronicles hint at the "Khǫm" invasions of

146) J.G. Scott and J.P. Hardiman, Gazetter of Upper Burma and the Shan States, Rangoon, 1900/1: 228

147) Coedès, "Documents": 80, 158; Sèng, op.cit.: 96

148) M. Vickery, "The Reign of Suryavarman I and the Dynamics of Angkorean Development", Paper presented to the Conferrence of the Association of the Historians of Asia, Kuala Lumpur, 1980: 2

Lower Burma. Thaton fell into the hands of Anawrahta (1044-77) in 1057. But the "Khǫm" (Khmer-Mǫn) of the lower Mènâm basin continued to raid Lower Burma. It was Kyanzittha (1086-1112) of Pagan who gained a final victory over them in defence of Pegu.[149]

According to G.H. Luce, the invasions of the Mǫn states in Burma by the Mǫn-Khmer from the lower Mènâm basin were "still a living memory in those parts four hundred years later".[150] They have implications for tamnân historiography. The old Mǫn word for the invaders is "Krom", and the old Burmese word for them is "Krwaṁ".[151] In the Burmese chronicles, this term is used to denote the people of, and in the lower Mènâm basin, long after the Khmer had been ejected from power in that region. As recipients of Burman/Mǫn culture, the Tai Yuan perpetuate the use of the term "Krwaṁ" in Lân-Nâ Thai historiography, and retained its original meaning, "people of the lower Mènâm basin". It is reported that the Tai Lŭ of Chiang Rung still use in modern time the word "Klwaṁ" (or Klǫm) to refer to the Siamese Tai.[152] In the inscriptions of late Sukhôthai, the word "Khǫm" is used also to refer to the Khmerized Ayutthayan people.[153] Rattanapanyâ, author of Jn, describes an event after Râmâthibǫdî's death in this manner: "Following the death of Râmâthibǫdî, the sovereign of Kamboja and Ayojjapura (Ayutthayâ), Vattitejo (Bǫrommarâchâ I) left Suvannabhumi, and conquered the kingdom of Kamboja".[154] For

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149) G.H. Luce, Old Burma-Early Pagán, Ascona, AA, Suplementum No. 25, 1969, vol. I: 23

150) ibid. 151) ibid.: 21

152) Buchuai Sîsawat, Thai Sip-sǫng-pan-nâ, Bangkok: Rapphim Press, d.n.: 41

153) Centre for Sukhôthai Studies, Sî Nakharin Univ., Châruk

uncritical readers, this quotation would seem to confirm the belief that Râmâthibǫdî I had conquered Cambodia (Kamboja), as suggested in late Siamese chronicles; and that after his death, Bǫrommarâchâ had to reconquer Cambodia. This is not very tenable.

It is most likely that Rattanapanyâ adhered to ancient concept of "Krwam-Kamboja" which was still alive in Burmese historical writings. Internal evidence shows that he was flexible in applying Kamboja to the Lopburî region in particular, and the kingdom of Ayutthayâ in the Siamese period in a wider context. In the above quotation, the first "Kamboja" means undoubtedly Lopburî, the old Mǫn-Khmer centre, and the second "Kamboja" means Ayutthayâ, i.e. "Country of the Khǫm". It appears that after Râmâthibǫdî I's death in 1369, Bǫromma-râchâ led his troops from Suphanburî, deposed Râmâthibodî's son, Râmésuan, and ascended the throne of Ayutthayâ.[155] I have also demonstrated by way of comparing the text of the Jn to that of MS/SD that Kamboja can be equated with Ayutthayâ.[156]

In the tamnân fashion, local place-names in the north of Thailand were rendered into Pali. Most of them are easily recognizable, for example, Nân becomes Nanthaburî; Yǫng = Mahi-yangkharat; and Chiang Râi = Chirâyanakhǫn. These place-names play their part in the tamnân geography as constituents of a wider region called Yonaka in the Mahāvamsa, and Yônokkarat in the Lân-Nâ Thai tamnân. According to Buddhist legend,

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Sukhôthai (Sukhôthai Inscriptions), 1977: No. 8 (ง): F.1/28-9/75; PSč/III: No. 45, F.1/27-9/63

154) Coedès, op.cit.: 100; Sèng, op.cit.: 115

155) Cf. LP/1680 in PP/1, Khurusaphâ edition, vol. 1: 131

156) See pp. 35-6 above.

Yonaka is a select place whither a Buddhist mission was sent to propagate the religion after the convening of the Third Council. When transferred to the north of Thailand, Yonaka had to be placed in juxtaposition to Gandhāra (Yunnan), if it was to represent Buddhist India to a certain degree. Jn, written in 1516, may actually have retained a long-established notion of Buddhist geography. It refers to Mangrâi's old kingdom as "Yonarattha", or "Country of the Yona (Greeks)".[157] Yonarattha was a name given to the Chiang Râi/Chiang Sèn/Phayao region. Probably, this was an alien tradition, which had not taken firm root, because after Mangrâi had captured Hariphunchai in 1292 and built Chiang Mai as his new capital in 1296, he adopted Phingkharat as the official name of the whole kingdom. The name Phingkharat Chiang Mai is confirmed by epigraphic evidence.[158]

Strangely enough, the concept of Yonarattha as a holy place was formed more strongly amongst the Burmese than the Tai Yuan themselves. The Thai word Yuan is a variant of "Yun" or Burmese rendering of "Yona". The Burmese called the king of Chiang Mai "Yun" king, and the people of Chiang Mai "Yun" Shan.[159] The Burmese even believed that "King Milinda was a Yun Shan and the famous book /Milindapanha7 was produced in the Shan country".[160]

In the tamnân historiography, the concept of Yônokkarat

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157) Coedès, op.cit.: 87; Sèng, op.cit.: 103

158) PSč/III: No. 71 (Inscription of Wat Phra Thât, Lamphûn): F.1/5/185; No. 76 (Inscription of Wat Chiang Man, Chiang Mai, dated 1581): F.1/18-9/212; No. 78 (Inscription of Wat Phra Thât Lampâng Luang, dated 1796): F.1/5/229

159) See Kyaw Dun, "Notes and Reviews: Lacquer Ware Called 'Yun'", JBRS, 10, 2 (Aug. 1920): 75

160) ibid.

paved the way for what Peter Burke terms "myth-as-explanation".[161] The Tamnân Singhanawatikumân (TS), which purports to deal with the legendary origin of the North, has it that Yônokka Nakhǫn, a city founded by Singhanati, a Tai prince from Yunnan, was thus named because Buddha had visited it, and while sitting on a rock at the top of Dǫi Din Dèng, he prophesied:-

> When the Tathāgata, "We, Buddha", have attained the nibbāna, Mahâkassapathera will take a piece of Our collar-bone and encase it in this rock. A ṛsī (ascetic) will come to protect this place, and this town will become a great capital, the seat of Our religion as well as of a great sovereign.[162]

A melting pot of local tales, the TS has no historical value at all. But of all the Tai tamnân, it is the most elaborate piece of religious chronicular writing. Its author sets up a "Buddhist India" scene in the extreme north of Thailand, Yunnan, and Upper Burma. These classical names are referred to: Barānasī, Rājagariha, Mithilā (all in Yunnan); Vesālī, Kosambhī (in Upper Burma); and Yonaka (Chiang Râi/Chiang Sèn/Phayao area of North Thailand). This geographical arrangement was characteristically Shan (Rājagariha = Tali; Mithila = Yunnan-fu);[163] the Burmese would give the name Gandhāra to Yunnan. The author of TS makes Singhanati, son of the king of Rājagariha, Buddha's contemporary so that Buddha could visit Singhanati's newly built capital, Bandhu Singhanati Nakhǫn. Perhaps the most important feature of TS is

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161) Peter Burke, The Renaissance Sense of the Past, London: Edward Arnold, 1969: 8

162) Camille Notton, Annales du Siam, I,: 165

163) ibid.: 219

the first section on Buddha's numerous visitations to the various places in the North where he predicted his relics would be enshrined.

The date of composition of TS is not known. Rattanapanyâ, compiler of Jn, who was a native of Chiang Râi, makes no mention of the TS at all. Nor does the MS/SD, which was written some years earlier than the Jn. The TS was probably written after the Pali culture at Chiang Mai had declined, because it was written in Tai Yuan, not in Pali. As it revived a local tradition concerning Chiang Râi/Chiang Sèn/Phayao, or the concept of "Yonarattha", which the Burmese held in high esteem, I would surmise it was written in or around 1614 to 1619 when Chiang Sèn was raised in political status by the Burmese.[164] The TS appears to have had a tremendous impact on the tamnân tradition of the Siamese, probably after a brief Siamese rule at Chiang Mai in 1661/2. When Simon de la Loubère, Louis XIV's envoy, visited the court of King Nârâi at Ayutthayâ in 1687, and wrote an historical account of Siam, we learn that the TS was presented as a prelude to another Siamese legend.[165] Towards the end of Ayutthayâ, the Siamese had localized the concept of "Yonarattha", for in the folk-tales of Lower Siam, Nǫng Sanô, the district where Ayutthayâ was originally located was also part of Yonarattha, in which the Buddha had wandered about.[166]

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164) "Tamnân Râtchawongpakǫn" in PTLT/I: 381; Notton, Chronique de Xieng Mái: 173

165) De la Loubère, op.cit.: 8

166) Khamhaikân: 47-8

VI

The Tamnân of Sacred Buddha Images

It was believed in traditional South-East Asia that certain objects and images of gods were palladia of a particular kingdom. These objects and images were thought of as possessing magical powers and acting as protectors of the kingdom. In time of war, the ruler of a country would seek to defile the sacred objects of his enemy, or remove them from their proper places. This being done, the magical strength of the other side was considered weakened. In 744 A.D., the Javanese Malay raided the town of Po Nagar (Nha-Trang) on the coast of central Vietnam, and they took away the liṅga, which was Champa's palladium.[167] The Siamese troops that conquered Angkor in 1431 returned with Khmer war captives and all the sacred images of Cambodia.[168] When Ayutthayâ fell in its turn to Bayinnaung in 1569, the sacred images of Cambodia and Ayutthayâ were transported to Burma.[169]

According to Khamhaikân, a historical document compiled by the Burmese from Siamese prisoners of war after the fall of Ayutthayâ in 1767,[170] the city of Chiang Mai possessed a triad of Buddha images which acted as guardians of its prosperity. Tradition has it that King Nârâi attacked Chiang Mai in 1661 because he was covetous of those sacred images. The testimony is confusing but it is reported that the Siamese eventually returned to Ayutthayâ with only two images, one of

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167) Coedès, Indianized States: 91
168) LP/1680 in PP/1: 134
169) Wannarat, Somdet Phra, Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ, Bangkok: Khlang Witthayâ, 1972: 170
170) Khamhaikân: 108

which was the famous Phra Phutthasihing "Lion" image.[171] The Khamhaikân says that these three images were ordered cast by the kings of Chiang Mai. Each image had a special feature. The "Lion" Buddha's eyes were made of miracle-inducing crystals, and the other image was carved out of core sandal-wood.[172]

The belief in a triad of sacred Buddha images was expressed in the local folklore of Chiang Mai as well as Sukhôthai. The Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Nû'a, "History of Upper Siam", talks of a king, Sîthammatraipidok (Lithai?), who cast these Buddhas: Buddha Chinasî, Chinarât, and Sîsâtsadâ, as a triad of Phitsanulôk.[173] This tradition may have dated from the fifteenth century A.D. One art historian believes that during the reign of King Tilôk's apostate father, King Sâmfangkèn (1401-41), "the demand for expensive images of the Buddha must have slackened, and the sculptural tradition declined".[174] With the emergence of the Siñhalese School of Buddhism, Buddhist art and architecture were revived by Tilôk and his successors. As in the ecclesiastical dispute at that time, orthodoxy won the day. Many tamnân were written in Pali, especially to extol several Buddhist statues in worship at Chiang Mai. The emphasis was being placed on the likeness of these important images to the person of the Buddha. The sacred images are said in the tamnân to have been cast by those who had seen the Buddha during his lifetime, so they served as the correct models. However, the images that formed the triad of Chiang

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171) ibid.
172) ibid.: 109
173) PP/1: 24
174) A.B. Griswold, Dated Buddha Images of Northern Thailand: 39

Mai were not always the same. Originally, the triad must have consisted of Phra Phutthasihing, Phra Kèw Mọrakot (Emerald Buddha), and Phra Phuttharûp Kènčhan (Sandal Buddha).

But in 1547, Upayôrât, who had been invited to be king of Chiang Mai in the previous year, returned to his native land, the Lao kingdom of Lân-Châng. He took with him the Emerald Buddha palladium, and this sacred image was not returned after Upayôrât had officially relinguished his claim to the Chiang Mai throne. It was to fall into Siamese hands in 1779, following the Siamese campaign against Laos by the Chakkrî brothers.[175] Thus the Khamhaikân does not include the Emerald Buddha among the triad of Chiang Mai. After 1547, the triad consisted of Phra Phutthasihing, the Sandal Buddha -which the Siamese envoys to Chiang Mai in 1521 had paid homage to-[176] and another unidentified Buddha image, probably the Great Buddha of Wat Bupphârâm Suan Dọk Mâi. In 1662, the central image, Phra Phutthasihing was transported to Ayutthayâ, and was thereafter worshipped in the Temple of Wat Phra Sîsanphet, the Royal Chapel. It became the palladium of Ayutthayâ for 105 years until the Chiang Mai army which joined the Burmese invading force in 1767 took it back to Chiang Mai. Then the Bangkok Prince of the Front Palace, Surasinghanât, led an expedition against the Burmese in the North in 1795, and reclaimed this sacred image. During the lifetime of the Prince, the "Lion" Buddha was kept in the compound of the Front Palace as mark of his immense merit. Following his death, Phra Phutthasihing was taken to the Royal Chapel of the Grand Palace.

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175) "Tamanân Phra Kèw Mọrakot" in PTLT/II: 34
176) Coedès, "Documents": 137; Sèng, op.cit.: 165

It was not until 1855, after Mongkut had come to the throne and appointed Prince Chuthâmanî as the Second King Pinklâo, that Phra Phutthasihing was returned to the Front Palace. Similarly, the Emerald Buddha, which Râmâ I transported back from Vientiane in 1779, has been associated with the supreme monarch, and as a result, the Emerald Buddha has taken precedence over the Phutthasihing image during the Bangkok period.[177]

Meanwhile, according to another tradition, the modern Chiang Mai triad consists of Phra Séwatângkhamanî (White Crystal Buddha), Phra Phutthasihing, and Phra Silâ (Stone Buddha). The White Crystal Buddha is associated with the wisâkha ceremonies in the month of May, when the rains on which the farmers depend for their crops are about to break.[178] It must be stressed here that in all likelihood none of these Buddha images is the real one. The Phutthasihing images now worshipped at Chiang Mai and Nakhon Sithammarât are replicas of the one at Bangkok. The White Crystal Buddha was made only in 1874 by order of Chão Inthanon, king of Chiang Mai. Phra Silâ is said to be a Chiang Mai reproduction of a Ceylonese style, a development of the Bharut tradition.[179] A tamnân history, which accompanies it, was written in Pali only in 1785.[180] A question thus arises concerning the credibility in general of this type of tamnân writing. We know definitely that the White Crystal Buddha was made in 1874, but its tamnân story says it had been made in Buddha's time.

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177) My interpretation is based on Prince Damrong's "Tamnân Phra Phutthasihing Tâm Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân" in Phra Phôthirangsi, Tamnân Phra Phuttha Sihing, op.cit.: 41-2

178) E.W. Hutchinson, "Sacred Images in Chiang Mai", JSS, 28 (1935): 116

179) ibid.: 119

180) ibid.: 117

The writing of tamnân of Buddha images was not unique to the Chiang Mai monks, but the most impressive Pali works such as Phra Phôthirangsî's Sihiṅganidāna and Phra Phrommarât-chapanyâ's Rattanabimbavamsa were models for other Pali writers to follow. The date of composition of these two important works is a matter of speculation. It is certain that the stories of both the Phra Phutthasihing and the Emerald Buddha existed way back in the vernacular language as indicated by the authors.

It is interesting to note that Phra Phrommarât implies that his account is by no means original, but is based on a certain legend. Coedès cited another Pali work entitled Amarakatabuddharūpanidāna written by a Burmese monk named Ariyavaṃsa. It is also a reproduction of the same Buddhist legend.[181] According to H. Saddhatissa, both work draw upon materials from Indian sources and were presumably composed towards the end of the fifteenth century.[182] Phrommarât leaves no clue as to the date of his work except that it was completed in a Cock year. Prince Damrong believed this to be C.S. 791 (A.D. 1421), as the compiler brings the story up to the time when the image was removed from Chiang Râi to Lampâng. The reference to the Mahârât of Chiang Mai in the Rattanabimbavamsa can be nobody else but King Tilôk, and this fact is confirmed by the Jinakālamālī.[183] We may conclude that Phrommarât composed his work either during Tilôk's reign (1441-87), or just after that time, but before Jn (1516) be-

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181) Coedès, "Notes": 46
182) Saddhatissa, op.cit.: 213
183) Coedès, "Documents": 115; Sèng, op.cit.: 133

cause the latter recounts a story from the Rattanabimbavamsa.

Discussing the Pali works written in Lân-Nâ Thai, Coedès is of the opinion that Phôthirangsî's Sihiṅganidāna, "History of the 'Lion' Buddha", was probably written at the beginning of the fifteenth century A.D., because the writer ends his story in the reign of Sâm Mû'ang Mâ (1385-1401).[184] Prince Damrong, writing an introduction to this work in 1913, believed that Sihiṅganidāna was written between 1460 and 1530, "because at that time the Pali culture was flourishing at Chiang Mai".[185] Nonetheless, Prince Damrong later changed his view. In 1932, he wrote a new introduction to the Sihiṅganidāna commenting that:-

> The Tamnân Phra Phutthasihing ... originally written in Pali by Phra Phôthirangsî could have been compiled in 1417 as it describes the history of Chiang Mai up till 1411. There is a prophecy in the tamnân of this Buddha image that when 2000 years of the Religion has passed a Thammikarât /Thammikarâchâ/ will emerge and take the image back to Ceylon. I would suggest that this tamnân history was written sometime in between 1411 (B.E. 1954) and 1456 (B.E. 2000).[186]

However, since the publication of the MS/PD in 1976, we have had a clearer picture of the religious dispute at Chiang Mai than ever before. The Sihiṅganidāna must be put in this perspective. The Sihing "Lion" Buddha is known popularly as Phra Sing or Phra Sîhon, Sîhon (Pali = Sīhala) referring to the Ceylonese. Consequently, Phra Phutthasihing, as the name suggests, is symbolic of Ceylonese Buddhism. The reference

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184) Coedès, "Notes": 44
185) Quoted in ibid.
186) Damrong, op.cit.: 1

to King Lithai's prophecy that in B.E. 2000 the image would be taken back to Ceylon where it was cast, is a cryptic way of saying that Buddhism would decline in that year. This prediction must be interpreted as a direct attack on the Suan Dǫk monks by a writer who was member of the Sinhalese School. The implication was that the Suan Dǫk monks did not adhere to the vinaya; their refusal to conform with the orthodoxy of Ceylonese Buddhism was considered detrimental to the state of the Religion. Taking this into consideration, I would surmise that the Sihiṅganidāna was written at the height of the religious dispute, probably in the 1430s towards the end of Sâm-fangkèn's Reign (1401-41).

The Rattanabimbavamsa and the Sihiṅganidāna were written in the same period, and in the same spiritual spirit. Like in all other forms of Buddhist art and literature where the masterpieces could be faithfully copied, these two works served as models for subsequent tamnân of Buddha images. Synopses of these two models will be given here for comparison.

The Rattanabimbavamsa: A Synopsis

After Buddha had passed away for 500 years, i.e. in B.E. 500, Thammarakkhit, a monk who resided at the Temple of Asôkârâm died. His disciple, Nāgasena, who was also King Milinda's reverenced teacher, wanted to have an image made to promote the Buddhist religion. He decided not to cast the Buddha image in gold or silver because people are so avaricious and sinful that they would harm it in no time at all. As a result, he wished to have an image made of crystal. Sakka, the Supreme deity (Indra), knowing of Nāgasena's wish, descended from his abode and offered help. He ordered his attendant, Vissukam, the God of Creation, to find a suitable precious stone for the purpose. Vissukam flew to Mt. Vipula and requested leave from the chief quardian of the celestial worlds (kumabhanda) to

take away a precious stone. This was granted and an emerald stone was taken to Nāgasena.

While Nāgasena was wondering as to who could transform the emerald stone into the desired Buddha image, Vissukam transmogrified himself into an engraver and undertook to carve up the stone. This finished, a Buddha image of one cubit and one inch high was revealed. Then Nāgasena and an assembly of monks performed a ceremony and invited seven Buddha relics to fly into the Emerald Buddha and reside there. Nāgasena predicted that the Emerald Buddha would in future be enshrined in Kamboja, Arimaddana, and Syām (meaning Lopburî, Pagan, and Lampâng or Northern Thailand).[187]

The Emerald Buddha remained in India for the next three hundred years until B.E. 800, when chaos reigned in that country and the Emerald Buddha had to be removed to Ceylon. The Emerald Buddha remained there until B.E. 1200. In that year, King Anuruddha (Anawrahta) of Arimaddana (Pagan) came to Ceylon in search of a correct copy of the scriptures. He took the image away with him, but the boat in which he put the image and the scriptures was carried out of its course by a storm, and its contents found their way to Kamboja (Lopburî). Anuruddha flew to that country, and used his magical power to force the King of Kamboja to return the scriptures, but he overlooked the Emerald Buddha.

The Emerald Buddha thus remained at Mahâ Nakhǫn (Angkor Thom?) until the King of Ayojjhapura (Ayutthayâ) carried it away after that city was flooded.[188] Then the ruler of Kam-

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187) The prediction, as will be seen, was not fulfilled, because the Emerald Buddha wandered from Ceylon to Lopburî/ Cambodia, Ayutthayâ, and Siam, not to Pagan at all.

188) The flood theme is quite common in the Northern Thai tamnân. The flood is symbolic of punishment meted out for an unjust ruler. In this particular tamnân story, the king of Kamboja has the son of one of his ministers killed because that child's fly has killed the fly of the king's son in a fair insect fight. The king's action is not well justified, and the minister has to move out of the city in some resentment. This incident infuriates the Nāga, "Serpent" king, so he issues forth water until the city is totally submerged under the flood. Its moral implication is that a Buddhist king must not forsake the "ten kingly ways"; should he do, he has to suffer consequences.

phèngphet who was covetous of this image carried it away by ruse to his city. Phrommarâchâ, the king of Chiang Râi, heard of the sacred image, came with an army, and then took the Emerald Buddha to the North. A dispute erupted when King Kilanâ died, because both his brother, Phrommarâchâ (Mahâ Phrom) and his son, Sèn Mû'ang Mâ, wanted the throne of Chiang Mai. Finally, Sèn Mû'ang Mâ conquered Chiang Râi. He took the "Lion" Buddha to Chiang Mai, but during the war the people of Chiang Râi had hidden the Emerald Buddha by covering it with a coating of lime. In the fifteenth century, it was rediscovered, and King Tilôk sent for it. But the Emerald Buddha manifested its will not to go to Chiang Mai by miraculously increasing its own weight so much that it proved too heavy to be carried over the hills. According to legend, the image wanted to rest at Lampâng, so it was carried by cart to that city. It remained there until a great Chédî (pagoda) was built by the king to house it properly at Wat Chédî Luang, "Royal Pagoda", Chiang Mai.

The Sihiṅganidāna: A Synopsis

The history of Phra Phutthasihing begins with the description of a special event in B.E. 700.

Chapter One: Three kings and twenty arāhant monks met in an assembly in B.E. 700.[189] They asked each other whether anyone amongst them had seen the Buddha when he was still alive. No one said had had except the Nāga king. The Nāga king was then invited to transform himself into the likeness of the Buddha which was so radiant that all came to worship him.

Chapter Two: The three Ceylonese kings and the monks decided that an image should be made of bronze while the Nāga king retained the true likeness of the Buddha. Once it was

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189) Jn says that only one king, the king of Ceylon, wanted to see the likeness of the Buddha. Coedès, "Documents": 97; Sèng, op.cit.: 112 The "Tamnân Phra Sing Phuttha Patimâ Châo" (History of the "Lion" Buddha) in PTLT/II: 36

made, the Nāga king returned to his serpentile form. It was prophesied that:-

> In the future this Buddha image will travel to Jambudīpa (i.e. the North of Thailand).190) When this "Lion" Buddha leaves, it will float upstream to the coast of of a select country. A devout king will tade care of the Buddha, and cut the fingers of this image to further purify it. Whenever a further 2000 years of the Religion has elapsed, a righteous king (Thammikarât) will have been born in the Island of the Sīhon (Ceylonese). He will take the "Lion" Buddha back to Ceylon.191)

Chapter Three: In B.E. 1500 (A.D. 956), Phra Ruang (Pal. = Saiyarañga, Surañgarāja, Sunarañga, var.)[192] was ruling at Sukhôthai. "His territory was very extensive. In the north it reached the River Nân; in the south it reached Ayodhya down to Sirithammarât. He was the supreme lord and had not equals. The people of Sukhôthai were happy and rich with all things". Phra Ruang heard of the famous Buddha, so he came down to Sirithammarât and asked its king to send for the image. The kings of Ceylon knew of Phra Ruang's prowess, so they decided to part with the "Lion" Buddha. The image was then put in a boat, but on the way from Ceylon to Sirithammarât (modern Nakhǫn Sîthammarât) the boat struck a reef; the strut on which the image stood remained afloat and was rescued off the shore.

Chapter Four: Phra Ruang invited the Sihing Buddha to go to Sukhôthai with him.

Chapter Five: The "Lion" Buddha was kept at Sukhôthai until the reign of King Lithai, "who had upheld the Triple Gem, and who was well-versed in the Tipitaka". Râmâthibǫdî, the Ayutthayan king, came and attacked Phitsanulôk (Dvisākhanagara). Râmâthibǫdî left his son, Teja, to govern the city. King Lithai asked Râmâthibǫdî to return Phitsanulôk, and Râmâthibǫdî complied. Lithai moved his capital south to Phitsanulôk and took with him the "Lion" Buddha. After Lithai had died, Râmâthibǫdî took the sacred image to Ayutthayâ.

Chapter Six: The king of Kamphèngphet wished to have

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190) See pp. 72-3 above

191) Phôthirangsî, op.cit.: 7

192) All these Pali variants are actually an embellishment of "(Sî) Sainarong", the title of the viceroy of Phitsanulôk after the old kingdom of Sukhôthai had lost its independence in the early C15th.

the "Lion" Buddha for himself. He sent his mother to the court of Ayutthayâ, and lured Râmâthibọdî, his suzerain, into giving her the image, which she took to Kamphèngphet.

Chapter Seven: At that time King Kilanâ reigned at Chiang Mai, and his brother reigned at Chiang Râi. Mahâ Phrom, the ruler of Chiang Râi, heard of the "Lion" Buddha from a monk, who had just come from Kamphèngphet. He led his troops towards Kamphèngphet, and forced its king to relinguish the sacred Buddha. Phra Phutthasihing was then brought to Chiang Râi.

Chapter Eight: King Kilanâ of Chiang Mai died, and was succeeded by his son, Sâm Mû'ang Mâ. Mahâ Phrom wanted also to be king of Chiang Mai. This led to the war of succession in which Sâm Mû'ang Mâ gained final victory. The Chiang Mai king took the "Lion" Buddha from Chiang Râi to Chiang Mai. After Sâm Mû'ang MâIs death, his son succeeded to the throne.

The historical value of these two chronicles is only modest.[193] Art historians believe that the "Lion" Buddha now housed in the Phutthaisawan Chapel of the National Museum in Bangkok is of the post-classic Sukhôthai style, namely, the fifteenth-century period.[194] As it retains most of the distinctive features of the classic Sukhôthai images, it is thought to have been a late 15th century copy of the image which had been the palladium, or magic protector, of the Sukhôthai kingdom.[195] But this leads to the comment that:-

> In contrast to the majority of Sukhôthai images, the Sihing is seated in the posture of meditation, both hands in the lap, right hand on the left. This combination of hand and leg position is seen on a great num-

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193) Coedès, "Notes": 44

194) Carol Stratton and Miriam McNair Scott, The Art of Sukhothai: Thailand's Golden Age from the Mid-Thirteenth to the Mid-Fifteenth Centuries, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1981: 82

195) ibid.

ber of Singhalese seated Buddhas.[196]

It is explained that, in post-classic images, the convention of the Sukhôthai period was probably introduced into sculpture by new interpretations of the Pali texts.[197] The gist of the argument is that the Phutthasihing image is not really of Ceylonese origin. Since the date of its casting is not certain, it is reasonable to assume that it was made before the tamnân history associated with it was written in the second quarter of the fifteenth century. Such is also the case with the Stone Buddha (C18th) and the White Crystal Buddha (C19th). It is claimed in the tamnân of the latter two Buddha images that they were also made in India or the "localized India". Other tamnân of Buddha images are modelled after the Rattanabimbavamsa and the Sihiṅganidāna.

The Tamnân Phra Silâ: A Synopsis

The Stone Buddha was created in Râtchakhú (Rājagiha) by King Achâttasattû seven years after Buddha's parinibbāna. Under the supervision of Kassapathera, a coral stone, which had been brought from the ocean, was carved up by artisans into a Buddha. Achâttasattû was one of the eight recipients of Buddha's relics, so the extent and the nature of the relics are described in detail. Seven of them are said to have been embodied in the Stone Buddha, thereby endowing it with miraculous powers. The second part of the tamnân relates that the Stone Buddha was removed by three thera monks, Silavaṃsa, Revato, and Yânnakhamphî,[198] from Râtchakhú to Ceylon, where its king invited the three monks to stay. They decided how-

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196) ibid.

197) ibid.: 85

198) "Tamnân Phra Sîlâ Wat Chiang Man" in PTLT/II: 57; The name of Yânnakhamphî may have some symbolic significance in this tamnân history, because it is the name of a talented young monk, who was sent by the Chiang Mai saṅgha to learn the true Buddhism in Ceylon in 1423. His return in 1428 heralded the new era of religious activity in Lân-Nâ Thai. See pp. 28-45 above.

ever to bring the Stone Buddha to Hariphunchai.

The miraculous power of the Stone Buddha to produce rain was manifested during a shortage of fresh water on the sea journey from Ceylon to Lakhû'ang (Mon country?), where an attempt by the ruler of that place to detain the Stone Buddha was not successful. It came passing through Sawankhalôk to its resting place at Lampâng where it remained for a long time.

The Stone Buddha was then transported to Chiang Mai during the reign of Tilôk in c.1480. Its first abode was Wat Mûn Sân, until Tilôk brought it into his Royal Sanctuary. All that is mentioned of its subsequent history is a repetition of the rain-producing qualities of the image.

The Tamnân Phra Séwatângkhamanî: A Synopsis

When the Buddha had been 25 years at Wat Khetawanârâm (Wat Pâ Tân), he went round begging one day along the banks of the River Ping to the south east of Mount Ussu (Doi Suthep), as far as the grove of Mâi Yâng trees, where he sat down under a clump of five trees to rest after his pilgrimage.

Khun Sen Tong brought five maidens and offered them with himself as servants, but Buddha refused the offer and preached to him that he should enter his niece of seven years old as a nun.

Buddha then prophesied that 837 years after his death, a city named Chî Mai would be founded there.[199] He then returned to Wat Pâ Tân.

Khun Sen Tong had the likeness and the prophecy of the Buddha engraved upon a stone and buried at the source of the River Khâ, west of Doi Suthep.

Later, Phra In (Sakka) brought a crystal from the Second Heaven and gave it to Phrayâ Râm, King of the Lawa country, ordering a figure of the Buddha to be carved in the month of May on the 8th day of the waxing moon.

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199) Hutchinson, op.cit.: 116 This is another case of a myth-as-explanation for the name "Chiang Mai". Chî Mai means "New Nun".

Subsequently, Nâng Châmmathéwî brought the crystal figure from Mû'ang Lawô and deposited it a Lamphûn. When Mangrâi conquered Chiang Mai, he invited the White Crystal Buddha to be placed in Chiang Mai, where it remained until Phrayâ Suriyawong removed it by stealth to Ayutthayâ.[200] Afterwards, Phra Mû'ang Yọt brought it back and placed it again in the sacred sancturary, where it was preserved until Phrayâ Mû'ang Sâm Phrayâ established the ceremonial which has been handed down from one generation to another, and performed each year the eighth day of the waxing moon to the full moon in the month of May from the year 1379 onwards. During the festival, the image is bathed in water from Wiang Chet Lin.[201]

The tamnân history of these Buddha images provides the psychological basis for the Tai perception of the past, although it has little pretence ever of factual history. In the Tamnân Phra Séwatângkhamanî, themes from the Rattanabimbavamsa and Sihiṅganidāna become mixed up. In fact, the White Crystal Buddha was made only in 1874, and all claims concerning its origin are very recent falsifications.

During the Ayutthayâ period, in 1662, King Nârâi had the Sihing Buddha transported from Chiang Mai to his capital. The "Lion" Buddha was worshipped in the Royal Chapel until the fall of Ayutthayâ in 1767. The Sihing Buddha was the pride of the Siamese court. In mid-1718, when the Spanish ambassador, Don Gregorio Bustamente Bustillo, came to Ayutthayâ, the image was highly adorned. According to Don Gregorio,

> The principal idol was all but wrought gold, valued at three millions and a half (of dollars), containing

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200) If any sense can be made of this story at all, one must suppose that the author was referring to the war between Ayutthayâ and Chiang Mai in 1661/2, and Phrayâ Suriyawong is King Nârâi of Ayutthayâ.

201) Hutchinson, op.cit.: 117

> in it many diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and other precious stones. The remaining idols were of silver, and much jewellery was contained in them... They were convinced that no other in the world could equal it..[202]

Later, a mission was sent by the king of Ceylon to Ayutthayâ to request King Bǫrommakôt (1733-58) to despatch some Siamese monks to perform re-ordination in his country because the Ceylonese saṅgha had gone into decline. The mission of the Ceylonese saṅgha arrived at Ayutthayâ in 1756. The envoys were taken to the Royal Chapel to pay respect to the Sihing Buddha. According to the Thai source,

> Having beheld the "Lion" Buddha in its full splendour in the Royal Chapel, the Ceylonese ambassador and his entourage started discussing amongst themselves the origin of the image. The king's messenger therefore related to them the story of the Phra Phutthasihing. Having heard it, the Ceylonese said that this tamnân history did not exist in their country. The king replied: "We shall have Our messenger copy the Sihiṅganidāna so that Your Excellency can present it to the king of Ceylon, and please inform His Majesty to keep it in his kingdom.[203]

The Sihiṅganidāna is more or less representative of some other Pali works of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Depending on one's point of view, Chiang Mai monks can either be described as innovative in their approach to Pali literature, or notorious falsifiers of the Pali texts. In the first case, the Māleyyatherasutta is a good example. It became a well-known work in 1736, when a son of King Bǫrommakôt of

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202) Quoted in Damrong, op.cit.: 41

203) Cited and translated by Sir John Bowring, The Kingdom and People of Siam, Oxford in Asia Reprints, 1969, vol. 2: 133

Ayutthayâ, Châofâ Kung, adapted it into a popular Siamese classic entitled Phra Mâlai Khamluang. Saddhatissa believes it comes from amongst those apocryphal Pali suttas which were forged in Thailand, and that the Pali original was probably written in Chiang Mai around 1500.[204] His further comment is that:-

> The author, whoever he was, is obviously indebted to some of the Jātakas such as the Lohakumbhijātaka, Samkiccajātaka, Mahānāradakassapajātaka, and especially the Nimijātaka, but he does not adhere to his sources very faithfully. It is probable that the story in brief was originally composed in Ceylon but rewritten in greater detail in northern Thailand.[205]

In the second case, the Panyâtchâdok, "50-Jātakas", was ordered destroyed by a Burmese king on the grounds that it was a collection of forged works.[206]

Finally, one has to account for the exaggerations found in the tamnân phra phuttharûp, "Histories of the Buddha Images". A.B. Griswold thinks that they contain certain clues relating to the evolution of styles of Buddha images made in Thailand.[207] His view is undeniably too speculative. It is clear that the tamnân phra phuttharûp must be interpreted in the historiographical tradition of Lân-Nâ Thai. A Buddha image represents more than anything else the Buddhist Religion; its peregrination symbolizes the course of progress of Buddhism; and the choosing of Chiang Mai as its final resting-place is part of the process of self-fulfilling prophecy, based on the assumption that Chiang Mai was a flourishing Buddhist centre.

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204) Saddhatissa, op.cit.: 215
205) ibid.
206) Damrong, "Introduction", Panyâtchâdok: 2
207) Griswold, op.cit.: 43-4

VII

The Tamnân Covering the Distant Past:

Discussing the tamnân covering the distant past, we enter the most obscure period of Thai history, namely, events prior to the second half of the thirteenth century A.D. We may divide the tamnân of this type into two groups for analytical purposes: (1) the Tai Yuan group comprising the Tamnân Singhanawatikumân (TS), the Nithân Khun Bœrommarâchâ, the Tamnân Lâo Chok, the Tamnân Suwannakhômkham, the Tamnân Suwannakhamdèng, and an historical poem called Thâo Hung or Khun Chû'ang; (2) the Siamese group comprising those tamnân stories in Phra Wichianprîchâ's Phongsâsadân Mû'ang Nû'a, which was compiled in 1807. The sources of these tamnân are varied, ranging from the Purānas and the Jātakas to local legends. Although they are of little value as historical testimony, attempts have been made by various scholars to exploit these tamnân stories. Problems arise when there are many versions of the same story or personage. What happens is that some scholars would uncritically accept one version and reject another outright, or otherwise try to reconcile two or more traditions in a speculative way.

The Traditional Tai Yuan Perception of the Past

It would be wrong, I think, to start talking about the twentieth-century Thai views of the ancient past without realizing that Siam as a nation-state come into being at the earliest in the reign of King Chulâlongkœn (1868-1910), and that the modern Thai perception of the past has been heavily influenced by the nationalistic writings of the 1930s and 1940s.

As newcomers on the South-East Asian scene around the eleventh century A.D., the various ethnic Tai groups appear to have carried with them into their new settlements a common cosmogony. Throughout the centuries, the core of this cosmogonic myth remained the same, but it was often dressed up in Buddhist and Hindu clothing depending on when and where the Tai came into contact with these two cultures. Besides this, the Tai had a tendency to adopt a new identity by portraying themselves as successors to the ancient kingdoms they helped to put an end to. Often, they were also assimilated into local traditions and adopted local themes as their own. This was a cultural process in societies in which the idea of nation and a sense of true history did not exist. There are thus many alien elements in the tamnân tradition that can be identified and rejected as accretions. Although there is not space here to treat of every tamnân history in this category in great detail, I think it essential to highlight some of their special features.

"The Tai Mandate of Heaven" and the Descent of the First Tai King(s):

Khun Bǫrommarâchâ and Lâo Chok VS Khun Lû and Khun Lai

The Nithân Khun Bǫrommarâchâ[208]

The legend of Khun Borom is well-known among the Tai on the east bank of the River Mèkhông, and in the old days it became the central theme of the cosmogonic legends of the Tai Yuan of Chiang Mai, the Shan of Upper Burma and the Assamese of northeast India. There are many versions of the legend of

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208) This legendary character is sometimes called Khun Bulom in the Lao materials.

Khun Bǫrom, the oldest of which, is reckoned by Maha Sila Viravong to have been written by Mahâ Thep Luang in 1503, during the reign of King Wichunnaharât (1501-20) of Lân-Châng (Laos).[209] In the Lao literature, Khun Bǫrom is called Khun Bûlom Râchâthirât, which is also the title of the work by Mahâ Thep Luang.[210] Other versions have been published in the Bangkok Prachum Phongsâwadân, "Collection of Historical Documents", Part 1, 11, and 70.[211] Some versions have been translated into French.[212] Of all the versions available, the legend of Khun Bǫrom which forms the first part of the Phongsâwadân Lân-Châng of PP/1 is perhaps the fullest version. The Phongsâwadân Lân-Châng was a late compilation, but it seems that the compiler had taken the legend of Khun Bǫrom from another source and incorporated it into his main work without tampering with it. There is not much difference among the texts, but the synopsis which follows is taken from the Phongsâwadân Lân-Châng, originally discovered by Phrayâ Prachâ-kit (Chèm Bunnâk) towards the end of the nineteenth century.

Synopsis

The first chapter deals with distant past prior to the

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209) Mahâ Sila Viravong cited in Vo Thu Tinh, "Etude Historique du Laos: Les Origines", Bulletin des Amis du Royaume Lao, No. 1 (avr.-jui. 1970): 13

210) ibid.

211) Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Lân-Châng, PP/1, Khurusaphâ ed., vol. 2: 134-48; Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Luang Phrabâng, PP/11, Khurusaphâ ed., vol. 10: 149-51; Nithân Rû'ang Khun Bǫrom-râchâ, PP/70, Khurusaphâ ed., vol. 43: 254-79

212) Louis Finot, Annales du Lanxang: Origines légendaires -fondation du Royaume de Lanxang Hom Khao, FA texte, 12 (1956); Nithan Khun Bǫrom in Auguste Pavie, Mission Pavie Indo-chine, 1879-1895, Etudes Diverses II: Recherches sur l'histoire du Cambodge, du Laos et du Siam, Paris: Ernest Leroux, Editeur, 1989: 1-77

arrival of the Tai in mainland South-East Asia. It begins with the arrival of a Phrayâ Yak, "Lord of the Demons", from Langkâ (Ceylon), in the city of Sî Sattanâkhanahut (Luang Phrabâng) in Laos. This king of demons named Nantha ruled Luang Phrabâng with his queen, Phra Mahâthéwî, and they had a daughter called Nâng Kângrî. Not long afterwards, Nantha died. He is said to have been re-born as the king of the city of Inthapat (Buddhist classical name for Angkor). He had a son called Phutthasen who was married off to his half-sister, Nâng Kângrî. This couple had a son named Phisî and a daughter named Nâng Phisai who were married to each other. Phisî and Phisai had a son named Ai Chalerk Erk and a daughter named Nâng Ù'a Chalúm Fâ, who were again incestuously married to each other. The tale goes on to tell us of a last such couple, Ai Chet Hai, and Nâng Klâo Yai, who had "hare-lipped mouths and stretched-out ears". "These people", we are told, "were descendants of Phrayâ Yak Nantha and Nâng Mahâthéwî. They met complete disaster because they were incestuous".

Following the downfall of the Ceylonese family, two rsî (ascetics) emerged on the scene to preach to the natives of the land not to make war against each other and not to violate other people's wives. The two ascetics then helped the natives to found a new town in the middle of which they set the sacred town stèle (Sao Inthakhîn). This new town was named Sî Sattanâkhanahut Râtchathânî Sî Chiang Khong Chiang Dong in accordance with three auspicious omens. Not very long after, a merchant from Wiang Chan (Vientiane) came up the Mèkhông to trade at Lân-Châng. On the way, he dreamed that he had held the sun and the moon in his hands. He asked for a monk's

advice, and headed for Lân-Châng where heaps of bullion fell into his possession. He gave away gold and silver to the townsmen and then was elevated to be king. His descendants succeeded him for many generations until a new chief arrived there and founded another dynasty. The name of the third king of this dynasty was Shwâ, and the city of Luang Phrabâng was also known as Shwâ. The first Chapter ends with a list of the eight kings of Khun Shwâ's family before the last king was toppled by Khun Lǫ, a son of Khun Bǫrom. This heralded the rise of the Tai in Laos.

The second Chapter of the Nithân Khun Bǫrommarâchâ still begins in time immemorial when the Earth and Heaven were in reach of each other, and thên (gods) and men could communicate and travel to each other's places. In that distant past, Phrayâ Thèn ruled in the celestial sphere; on earth there were three chiefs, Khun Khân, Khun Dek, and Pû Lâng Cherng. These three chiefs and their followers settled in the plain (Mû'ang Lum); they grew rice and caught fish. Once Phrayâ Thèn happened to order that:-

> Whenever you eat rice, whenever you have your breakfast or an evening meal, you should invoke the Lord of Heaven. Whenever you eat beef, you must send Us a leg of ox; whenever you eat fish, you must make offerings to Us.

These hints were not heeded even after several warnings. Phrayâ Thèn, Lord of Heaven, became so angry that he caused the flood to rise and inundate the world of men.

The three chiefs, knowing beforehand that Phrayâ Thèn was seeking vengeance, caused the rafts to be built so that they and their families could escape the disaster. When the flood actually came, their rafts were swept up to Heaven where

they offered their apologies. Phrayâ Thèn accepted them and let them stay in Heaven until the flood began to recede and land appear again. The three chiefs then begged Phrayâ Thèn to let them come down to earth again because they felt they did not belong to Heaven and high places. Phrayâ Thèn agreed to send them down to a lowland site called Nâ Nọi Ọi Nû together with a buffalo. After three years, the buffalo died. Out of the buffalo's nostrils came three Nâm Tao Pung (calabashes) of extra-ordinary size. When the calabashes became ripe, a lot of men could be seen in each of them. As they made a loud noise, Pû Lâng Cherng, one of the chiefs, pierced the calabashes with a red hot iron pole. The men inside struggled to get out. Khun Khân, another chief, brought a chisel and made more holes for the men to get out. The calabashes issued men continuously for three days and three nights before they became empty.

Tradition has it that those who came out through the holes pierced by the red hot iron pole were ancestors of the Khâ, an ethnic minority of Laos, and those who came out through the chisel holes were ancestors of the Tai. The three chiefs taught the Khâ and the Tai how to build houses and told them to respect their parents and the elderly. When their parents died, Pû Lâng Cherng told them how to conduct the funeral rites. The Tai were taught to cremate the corpses of the dead while the Khâ interred the dead.

It was not long before the population of the Tai and the Khâ grew so numerous that the three chiefs could not cope by themselves. Therefore, they informed Phrayâ Thèn Luang of their problems. The latter decided to send Khun Ḳhrû and Khun

and Khun Khrǫng to help govern the whole population of the plain at a place called Mû'ang Thèn. These two did not govern well, and became drunkards, so Khun Dek and Khun Khân went up to see Phrayâ Thèn in Heaven, and requested that Khun Khrû and Khun Khrǫong be recalled to Heaven. This time Phrayâ Thèn decided to send a man of virtue, Khun Bǫrom, to rule on earth. Receiving the mandate of the Supreme God of Heaven, Khun Bǫrom descended from Heaven in great pomp, because from that moment on, the direct communication between Heaven and Earth would be terminated. Khun Bǫrom was accompanied by other gods, Thèn Dèng, and Thèn Krom, Thèn Trâ, and his chief queen, Nâng Ek Dèng, and his second queen, Nâng Yommaphân. His regalia and all the signs of civilization were carried down from Heaven.

Having descended on earth at Mû'ang Lum Nâ Nǫi Ǫi Nû, Khun Bǫrom began to organize his administration and extend his territory. As the city of Mû'ang Nâ Nǫi Ǫi Nû was prosperous and originally created by gods, it was to be called Thèn, meaning the city of gods.[213] Khun Bǫrom had seven sons. Four: Khun Lǫ, Yî Phâ Lân, Sâm Chû Song, and Chet Chû'ang, were born of Nâng Yommaphân. When his son grew up, Khun Bǫrom sent them out to found their own cities. He then divided the descendants of the Tai and the Khâ who had been born of the magical calabashes into seven groups, and made his sons king of each group. He also gave them each an equal share

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213) This legendary origin was used by the Lâo Tai in the past to justify their treatment of the Khâ minority in Laos as a lower race than the Tai. This was a deep-rooted tradition in pre-modern Siam. The Siamese Tai, for example, believed they were the first nation on earth. See: Nicolas Gervaise, The Natural and Political History of

of the wealth of his kingdom. Khun Bǫrom then preached to his sons the kingly ways, saying that:-

> I ask you to be good kings to your peoples, to do your best to earn their love, to avoid quarelling and live in friendship together, and to see to it that your peoples look upon one another as you yourselves look on one another between elder and younger brothers, and that the rich help the poor, always to take advice before action, and never to fight against each other.
> Never kill your wives for their transgressions, for such is the will of Phrayâ Thèn; they were the first to be born, to cause their death would be to bring down trouble on the country, and make short the rule of your kings.
> May those who respect my words and are mindful of my counsels be happy in all their descendants, may those who are forgetful be short-lived.[214)]

Khun Bǫrom then distributed the precious stones and sacred swords to his sons, and assigned them the task of founding their own princedoms. This is the list of the places where they were supposed to set out for:-

	P. Lân-Châng		P. Luang Phrabâng	
Khun Lǫ	Shwâ (Lân-Châng)		Khun Lǫ	Shwâ
Yî Phâ Lân	Hǫ Tè (Yunnan)		Khun Lân	Hǫ Luang (Yunnan)
Sâm Chû Song	Kèw Chǫng Bua (Thanh Hoa, Vietnam)		Khun Song	Phrommathattarât (Cambodia?)
Sai Fong	Yônok (Chiang Râi)		K. Kham Phuang	Kumkâm Yônok
Ngua In	Ayodhya		Khun Intharâ	Lawô Ayodhya

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the Kingdom of Siam, A.D. 1688, tr. H.S. O'neill, Bangkok, 1928: 15; Cf. John Crawfurd, Journal of an Embassy to the Court of Siam and Cochin China, /1823/4/, Kuala Lumpur, 1967: 88, 145-6

214) English translation is from "The Testament of Khun Borom" in René de Berval, Kingdom of Laos: The Land of the Million Elephants and of the White Parosol, tr. Mrs Teissier du Cros et al., Saigon: France-Asie, 1959: 385

Lok Klom Chiang Khom (Kham Kert) Khun Chet Chiang Mû'ang Muan Chet Chû'ang Phuan (Laos) K. Chet Chû'ang Eastern Phuan

The Nithân Khun Bœrom ends with the expedition of Khun Lœ against the rulers of Mû'ang Shwâ. His army is said to have followed the course of the Nậm U until it reached the Mèkhông.

The Tamnân Lâo Chok

The Lâo Chok cult was well-known in the early sixteenth century A.D., as it is briefly referred to in Rattanapanyâ's Jn (1516), but strangely enough, the authors of MS/SD made no mention of it. A fuller version than that of Jn is to be found in the Chronicle of Chiang Mai, the Tamnân Singhanawatikumân,[215] the "Phongsâwadân" Mû'ang Ngern Yâng Chiang Sèn,[216] and the Râtchawongpakœn "Phongsâwadân" Mû'ang Nân (PP/10). All the chronicles cited are of C19th-20th composite style, an arrangement in which modern compilers put individual tamnân histories together in the same volume in chronological order. In these chronicles, one can be sure that the tamnân history of Lâo Chok derived from the same original, but details are slightly different in each of them owing to scribal errors that are bound to occur in the process of copying and oral transmission. For instance, Mangrâi is said in Jn to have been the 23rd king of the Lâo dynasty, while the Chronicle of Chiang Mai says he was the 25th in the line.[217]

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215) Camille Notton, (tr.), Annales du Siam, I,: 141-202; PP/61, Khurusaphâ ed., vol. 34: 52-63

216) PP/61, Khurusaphâ ed., vol. 33: 201-10

217) Coedès, "Documents": 87; Sèng, op.cit.: 103
PTLT/I: 185-6
Notton, Chronique de Xieng Mái: 21

Synopsis

The Jinakālamālī gives a brief account of the legend of Lâo Chok as follows:-

> "It is said that, once upon a time, a being who had acquired a great deal of merit during his previous existence, was reborn in the uppatika[218] way, under a jujube tree, in a city called Yângapura. Because of his former deeds, he possessed prowess, miraculous powers, energy, alertness, perseverance, sincerity, and asceticism. By virtue of these seven qualities, he was chosen leader of all men, and having built the city of Yângapura, he he became its first king. He was known in all Yonarattha as Lāvacaṅgarāja".[219]

In the secular tamnân compiled in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the story of Lâo Chok was transformed from a dateless into a dated tradition which was evidence of the influence of Burman and Shan historiography. In particular, it reflects perhaps the cultural impact of Burma's long domination of Chiang Mai. The Tamnân Singhanawatikumân (TS/PP/61) and the "Phongsâwadân" Mû'ang Ngern Yâng Chiang Sèn (PCS/PP/61) associate the descent of Lavacaṅkarāja with the eleventh-century establishment by Burmese King Anuruddha of the Burmese Era, Chunlasakkarât (C.S), beginning in B.E. 1182 (A.D. 639). At that time, in 639, the Tai Yuan had no ruler, so Indra, Supreme God, invited Lavacaṅka and his 1000 celestial attendants to descend from Heaven and be reborn in the uppatika way. Lavacaṅka, on descending from Heaven, was accompanied by his attendants, and walked down the silver stairway which linked Heaven and Earth. The site where they appeared so miraculously was called Ngern Yang, "Silver Stairway".[220]

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218) "Self-born"
219) Coedès, op.cit.
220) PP/61: 55

There are some minor differences between the Jn and later secular tamnân. What is reported in the former is myth-as-explanation created for the name 'lâo' or 'Lāva' which is probably derived from 'Lúa' or 'Lawâ', an ethnic term for the original inhabitants of the land.[221] In the sixteenth century, the Tai Yuan no longer understood this phonetic change as they had become intermingled with the natives and had adopted their cults. A contrived etymology was thus created for the word 'Lâo' to convey the meaning of "descendants of Lāvacaṅgarāja", Lāvacaṅgarāja being a Pali rendering of Lâo Chok. In the Tai Yuan tamnân, 'Lâo' or 'Lāva' (of Jn) relapses into 'Lúa' or 'Lawâ'.

In the secular tamnân, "Lāvacaṅgarāja" become "Lavacaṅkaraja". This transformation could easily occur if the copyist was not careful, because the graphic forms of 'g' and 'k' in Tai Yuan are quite similar. In the Chronicle of Chiang Mai, Lâo Chong is given instead of Lâo Chok.[222] The compiler adopts the Pali form given in Jn, "Lāvacaṅgarāja" (ลาวจงฺคราช), but by shortening it, the copyist's mistake led obviously to the omission of the small dot beneath ง, and it takes the orthographic form of 'ลาวจง' (Lâo Chong) instead of 'ลาวจฺ' (Lâo Chang).

The point where Lâo Chok descended from Heaven is not known. Jn implies that Yânggapura was Chiang Râi, the old capital of Yonarattha where Mangrâi came from. TS/PP/61 says it was Chiang Sèn, whereas PCS/PP/61 maintains it was Phayao. The theme of Lâo Chok was, then, a theme of convenience.

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221) Damrong, Prince, "Tamnân Nangsŭ Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân" (Introduction to the Royal Autograph Recension of the Chronicle of Ayutthayâ) in Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Chabap Phrarâtcha Hatthalékhâ, Bangkok: Odeon Store, 1952: 54

222) PTLT/I: 172; Notton, op.cit.: 14

Khun Lû and Khun Lai: The Shan Tradition

The theme of god descending to rule on earth, i.e. Khun Bọrom and Lâo Chok, was carried farther west by the Shan (Tai) of Upper Burma, but it thereby became even more complex. The story of Khun Lû and Khun Lai is told in all the Shan histories with apparently little variation.[223] The Mao Shan of Sèn Wî, for example, believed that in B.E. 1111 or A.D. 568, two sons of the gods, named Khun Lû and Khun Lai, received the mandate of the Supreme God to rule on earth. They descended from Heaven by a golden ladder and alighted in the valley of the Shwélî River. They were accompanied by two ministers, one of whom was descended from the sun and the other from the moon; they were also attended by an astrologer and a number of other mythical personages. On arriving on the earth, they found men who immediately submitted to them as rulers sent from the gods.[224]

According to the Shan chronicles, the Tai of Upper Burma made an inroad into Northeast India, and occupied Assam in 1229. The legend of Khun Lû and Khun Lai travelled with the Tai rulers into that country. Soon, it was absorbed into a Hindu creation-myth. Following a short story about gods and Heaven, the Ahom-Buranji, or the Chronicle of Assam, goes on to tell of the descent of Khun Lung and Khun Lâi from Heaven to earth by means of an iron ladder.[225] The site where they appeared was Mungrîmungrâm, actually two Shan place-names

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223) Scott & Hardiman, op.cit.: 218

224) ibid.

225) Rai Sahib Golap Chandra Barua, Ahom Buranji: From the Earliest Time to the End of Ahom Rule, Calcutta, 1930: 4

(Mû'ang Ham and Mû'ang Hî) for the region between Tali and Yunnansen in Yunnan (Southwestern China).[226]

The traditions of Khun Bǫrom, Lâo Chok, Khun Lû and Khun Lai, and Khun Lung and Khun Lâi, were local interpretations of the same common myth. The story of Khun Bǫrom is closest to the cosmogonic belief of the Tai in North Vietnam; who are less influenced by Buddhist and Hindu concepts of the cosmos.[227] Modern linguists' findings suggest that the original homeland of the Tai was in the area around Ba Thuc in North Vietnam. From there, and the region where the frontiers of Vietnam, Lâos, and Southeastern China meet, the Tai migrated first into Lâos. Then a group of Tai migrants moved westwards into southern part of Yunnan, North Thailand, and Upper Burma, whereas another group of them followed the course of the River U to central Laos and crossed the Mèkhông into central and northeast Thailand.[228] It is not unlikely that the myth of creation was carried along by various Tai groups to their new settlements. The Nithân Khun Bǫrom began probably as a hazy recollection of the cult of ancestor-worship, but once it came into contact with Buddhist culture it had to change its character. The "great theme" of Buddhist literature was used to clothe the coming of the 'holy' men. In Buddhist literature, Buddha himself was invited by gods in the Brahmaloka to be reborn on earth.

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226) Jean Rispaud, "Introduction à l'histoire des Tay du Yunnan et de Birmanie", FA, 17, 166, (mar.-avr. 1961): 1855

227) J-B Degeorge, "Légendes des tay (Annam)", Anthropos, 16-17 (1921-1922): 135-40

228) Information from J.R. Chamberlain, "A New Look at the History and Classification of the Tai Languages" in J.G. Harris and J.R. Chamberlain, (eds), Studies in Tai Linguistics in Honor of William J. Gedney, Bangkok: Office of State Universities, 1975: 58-63

The first Tai king descended from Heaven accompanied by his celestial attendants, and in the TS/PP/61 walked down the silver stairway, in the Shan Chronicle the golden ladder, and in the Ahom-Buranji the iron ladder. This is, of course, a myth taken from an episode in the life story of Buddha. Buddhist legend has it that during the three months of the seventh rainy Retreat, Buddha wished to preach the Abhidhamma to his mother, so with three strides he rose to Heaven. Having done that, Buddha came down a stairway of jewels accompanied by gods who came down a ladder of gold on the right and a ladder of silver on the left.[229] This is one of the most popular episodes depicted in the Buddhist art of C12th Pagan and C14th Sukhôthai.[230] The implication of these tamnân is that the Tai are a superior race and destined to be the ruling class.

A Myth of the "Lion" Prince: The Tamnân Singhanawatikumân

The TS/PP/61 has received a great deal of scholars' attention since the early 1960s, when Mânit Wanliphôdom started to revise its chronology, and presented it as conclusive evidence that the Tai had actually settled in the North of Thailand since the beginning of the Buddhist Era (C5th B.C.).[231] In a recent assessment of Mânit's study of the TS/PP/61, Michael Vickery not only criticizes Mânit's methodology and approach to the subject, but also refutes claims of TS/PP/61's authoritativeness.[232]

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229) E.J. Thomas, op.cit.: 114
230) Stratton & Scott, op.cit.: 70-2
231) Mânit Wanliphôdom, Tamnân Singhanawatikumân Chabap Sop Khon, "TS/PP/61 with its Revised Chronology", Bangkok: Historical Commission, 1973
232) M. Vickery, "The Lion Prince..", op.cit.: 326-77

There are at least four versions of the TS/PP/61 that can be cited here in order of publication date.

(1) Tamnân Singhanawatikumân as included in Phrayâ Prachâkit Kǫračhak (Chèm Bunnâk)'s Phongsâwadân Yônok, "History of the Tai Yuan", published in 1906.

(2) Chronique de Siñhanavati, a French translation of the Tai Yuan manuscript by Camille Notton in his Annales du Siam, volume I, published in 1930.

(3) The introductory part of the Tamnân Mû'ang Chiang Sèn (misnamed the Tamnân Singhanawatikumân), referred to here as TS/PP/61, published in 1963 in the Prachum Phongsâwadân, Part 61.

(4) Tamnân Singhanati Chaiburî Sî Chiang Sèn, whose original manuscript belonged to Khun Niwǫnrôkhâphât (Nǫmû'ang Chaiyawan) of Amphoe Mèsâi, but which has now been published in 1972 by Sa-nguan Chôtisukharat in his Prachum Tamnân Lân-Nâ Thai, volume I.

Although all these versions were apparently derived from the same source, the process of recopying and revision has contributed much to the differences which appear in the four texts, especially in matter of dates of events. Notton's Chronique de Siñhanavati (TS/CN) is by far the best preserved version, whereas Sa-nguan's Tamnân Singhanati may be the oldest and bear the more correct title than the other. In collating the two Thai texts, the TS/PP/61 and the Tamnân Singhanati (TS/SC), I have found seven short and long passages which appear in TS/SC (pp. 39, 40-43, 48-49, 54-55, 56-59, 65, 66) but are missing from TS/PP/61. This represents the scale of miscopying and carelessness on the part of the com-

piler and scribe. Such errors could sometimes be amended, but not always satisfactorily solved. Mânit's effort in tampering with the chronological framework of the TS/PP/61 is somewhat tendentious, and the result he arrived at is by no means legitimate because it has been based on a single text, the TS/PP/61, which is badly imperfect. More importantly, Mânit's refusal to consider the uniformity of the tamnân format was a self-imposed political view of conservative Thai historians of the 1960s.

Synopsis

The legend of the "Lion" Prince begins, like most tamnân histories, with a brief account of the Buddhavamsa (Buddha's life-story), and the setting is transferred to Yunnan, as in the Shan and Burman histories.

An ascetic called Kāladevirṣī and Phrayâ Singhahanu, Buddha's grand-parent, suppressed the Bôrânna Sakkarât, (Ancient Era) and established a new one called Mahâ Sakkarât (M.S. "Greater Era").

M.S. 17, a Kot Chai year,[233] a sovereign named Théwakân, chief of the Tai, ruled over the Tai country, namely, Rājagaha Nakhǫn Luang (Yunnan). This king of the Tai Mû'ang

233) In traditional Tai dating system, the era (normally C.S.) is accompanied by a sixty-year cycle designation. The expression for this purpose consists of one animal year and a numerical letter between 1 and 10. To demonstrate this complicated dating system, I shall list two columns below.

Numerals	Animal years
I Kâp	1 Chai (Rat)
II Dap	2 Pao (Bull)
III Rawâi	3 Yî (Tiger)
IV Merng	4 Mao (Hare)
V Plerk	5 Sî (Dragon)
VI Kat	6 Sai (Snake)
VII Kot	7 Sa-ngâ (Horse)
VIII Ruang	8 Met (Goat)
IX Tao	9 San (Monkey)
X Kâ	10 Rao (Cock)
	11 (S)met (Dog)
	12 Kai (Pig)

had thirty sons and thirty daughters, the oldest of which, a son, was called Phimphisân (Bimbisārājakumāra). The second son was named Singhanatikumân, because of his physical appearance and force which could be compared to a lion. The king distributed his possessions to his thirty sons and married them off to their thirty sisters. He appointed the oldest son, Phimphisân, as viceroy, and sent out the other twenty-nine couples to found their own principalities.

Singhanati took his possessions and came down with his court until he reached a place which was 7,000 arm-lengths (wâ) away from the Mèkhông. On the other side of the river was the ancient site of a town called Suwanna Khôm Kham. Singhanati set up his camp there on the first day of M.S. 18. A Phrayâ Nāga, named Phanthunâkkharât, metamorphosed himself into a Brahman priest, and appeared before Singhanati's camp advising the Lion Prince to found a city there. A city was was therefore built and given the name of Phanthu-Singhanati-Nakhǫn. In M.S. 20, Singhanati subdued the "Krǫm"[234] of Mû'ang Umongkhasélâ, and declared himself king of Lân-Nâ Thai.

In M.S. 67, 68, 97, and 102, there were four earthquakes announcing the imminent coming of Buddha into this world, Buddha's birth, Buddha's Great Renunciation of the world, and Buddha's enlightenment.

During his fifteenth retreat, Buddha came to Yônok to announce his religion and visit Singhanati. He wandered through Lân-Nâ Thai, accompanied by Phrayâ Asôk, the former king of Suthammawadî (Thaton), who renounced his kingdom and was ordained by the Buddha.

The first combination of the sixty-year cycle is Kat-Kai (vi, 12), "Pig Year, First of the Decade". The next combination will be Kot-Chai (vii, 1), "Rat Year, Second of the Decade", and so on. Therefore, M.S. 17, Kot-Chai corresponds to "Rat Year, Seventh of the Decade". See: G. Coedès, "L'Origine du cycle des douze animaux au Cambodge", T'oung Pao (TP), 31, 3-5 (1935): 315-29; Cf. Scott & Hardiman, op.cit.: 209-13; Cf. Sao Saimöng Manrai, "Cula Sakaraja and the Sixty Cyclical Year Names", JSS, 69, 1+2 (Jan.-Jul. 1981): 4-12

234) See pp. 119-21 below.

While visiting Singhanati, Buddha predicted that in the future, the city of Phanthu-Singhanati should be changed to Jaiyaburî Sî Châng Sèn, because the royal elephant had rushed out and trumpeted in honour of his arrival. Visiting next a small mountain, Buddha predicted the next name of Singhanati's kingdom would be Yônok Nakhǫn Râtchaburî Jaiyaburî Sî Châng Sèn. Buddha returned to Rājagaha in M.S. 119. In the following year (M.S. 120), Singhanati died at the age of 120, and after a reign of 102 years. He was succeeded by his son, Phanthati.[235] During Phanthati's reign, Buddha came to the bank of the Mèkhông at the end of his twentieth retreat. The chief of the Lúa people, Pû Châo Lâo Chok, presented him with rice. The Buddha prophesied this Lúa chief's great future, and the foundation of Yônok Nakhǫn as a Buddhist centre. In M.S. 148, the Buddha entered the nirvana (parinibbāna). Phrayâ Phanthati also died in the same year.

Phanthati was succeeded by his son, Achuttarât in M.S. 148. In India, Phrayâ Achâttasattû and Kassapathera decided to abolish the old era (M.S.) and establish a new one, which was the Buddhist Era (B.E.). Phrayâ Achuttarât died in B.E. 100, also at the age of 120. He was succeeded by his son, Mangrâiyanarât. The story goes on to tell us of the succession of Singhanati's descendants until B.E. 900, when a young king named Phang came to the throne. It is said that the "Krǫm" king of Mû'ang Umongkhasélâ, which was situated to the southwest of the Tai capital, rebelled against his Tai overlord and deposed King Phang. The exiled king had a son named Phrommakumân. This young prince grew up to be a brave man and possess miraculous powers. He led the Tai army against the king of the "Krǫm" and drove them southwards until they reached a place where Indra intervened for fear that the "Krǫm" race would become extinct. When the "Krǫm" had entered Lavarattha (Lopburî), Indra caused stone walls to rise in front of Phrommakumân's troops, and the young prince had to return. Phrommakumân ruled Yônok for 59 years, and his son, Chaisiri succeeded him in C.S. 456. In B.E. 1000 Yônok Nakhǫn was invaded

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235) Variant, Phanthuti. Notton, Annales du Siam, I,: 165

by the king of Suthammawadî. Chaisiri was defeated and had to leave the city. He moved his court down to Kamphèngphet, the place from which Phrommakumân, his father, had chased away the "Krǫm".

The TS was totally ignored by serious historians such as G. Coedès and Prince Damrong, and it is not difficult to see that it is more fictional than historical, despite its chronological complexities. Historiographically, however, it deserves a critical dissection.

(1) The Genesis of the Myth of the Lion Prince.

It is not certain when the original TS was written as there is no colophon giving the name of the author and the date of the work. Camille Notton's Chronique was copied from an earlier manuscript in 1880.[236] The TS was perhaps a well-known myth in the seventeenth century A.D. The fact that Jn does not refer to it means that it did not exist in the early sixteenth century; if it had, Rattanapanyâ, a native of Chiang Râi, would certainly have mentioned it.

There was a tendency among the Chiang Mai monks to borrow episodes from the Pali literature of Ceylon and rewrite them in the guise of local histories. Anyone familiar with the Mahāvamsa would recognize it immediately as the source of the TS. According to the Mahāvamsa, a daughter of the king of Vaṅgas (Bengal?) was prophesied to become bride to the king of beasts. A lion took her for his wife, and they had two children, a boy named Sīhabāhu, and a girl named Sīhavālī. The boy was thus named because his hands and feet were formed like a lion's. The lion harassed the people of the city, so

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236) ibid.: 202

the king of Vaṅgas offerred reward for anyone who could kill the lion. Sīhabāhu then slew the lion, his own father, and was called Sīhala.[237] He built a new city called Sihapura and made his sister, Sīhavālī, his chief queen. They had thirty-two sons, of whom the oldest was Prince Vijaya. Vijaya was such a violent man that townsfolk wanted the king to kill him and his followers, but the king had all of them shaved and banished them. They travelled southward until they landed at Laṅkā (Ceylon) and settled there. Their offspring from then on have been called Sīhala, because they are descendants of the Lion Prince.[238]

The myth of the Lion Prince was undoubtedly known through the Mahāvamsa. A C15th tradition had it that the Lion Prince was a ruler of Chiang Mai. It is from a religious work of Yânnakitti entitled Atthasālinī-Atthayojanā, written in 1495, that we learn of this legend. It is said in the colophon that:-

> There was a noble city called Abhinavapura, "Great New City" /Chiang Mai/, to the northeast of which was located a monastery called Panāsārāma, where jackfruits were in abundance, which was attractive to many people. There was a king of lion-like nature who could not be dominated. Wise, with great merit, he was the owner of four white elephants. That monarch of great fame was born of a noble dynasty, was a king of kings, compassionate, bearing the epithet of Laṅkā, he built this monastery which radiated beauty.[239]

The name "Singhanawatikumân" as in the TS/PP/61 is also a twisted form of "Sīhala". The Tai used the term "Siṅhala"

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237) Geiger, op.cit.: 51-2
238) ibid.: 58
239) Saddhatissa, op.cit.: 214

to describe the people of Ceylon. Since the Tai do not pronounce a final graphic 'l' (ฬ) with the phonetic equivalent 'l', but 'n', and tend to produce a graphic form, which represent what they actually say, the graphic 'l' could easily become a final 'n'. If orthography was not strictly observed, this would naturally occur. I know of an instance of a final 'l' becoming 'n' in an inscription from Chainât where the word "Siñhala" is written "Sinhana".[240] Of course, "Siñhana" could easily become "Siñhanati", and an unwary scribe could have made it better Pali-sounding than "Siñhanati" by amending it to "Siñhanavati", which has become the title of TS/PP/61.

(2) The whole structure of the TS is made up of widely known local traditions. The sharing of wealth by the first Tai king for his sons, and his sending them out to found their own cities are common themes in the Tai tamnân such as the Nithân Khun Bǫrom, and the legend of Lâo Chok, and the various Shan histories. None of these has any historical foundation.

(3) Phrommakumân and the "Krǫm"

The legend of Phrachâo Phrom or Phrommakumân, who drove the "Krǫm" down from the North to Kamphèngphet and into Lopburi, may actually be a hazy recollection of the historical personage, Mahâ Phrom, who was the fourteenth-century King Kilanâ's younger brother and vassal king of Chiang Râi. According to the Chronicle of Chiang Mai cited above, Mahâ Phrom tried to usurp the throne of Chiang Mai after Kilanâ's death. The Chiang Mai nobility sided with Kilanâ's son, Sèn Mû'ang Mâ, and repulsed Mahâ Phrom's troops in the direction of Ayutthayâ. Mahâ Phrom

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240) PSČ/III: No. 51, F.1/2/90

had to flee to the Siamese king for safety. He led the Siamese attack on Chiang Mai, but was defeated at Lampâng. It is claimed that he violated the Siamese king's wife, and was banished from Ayutthayâ. On his way to the North, he took the Sihing image with him. Finally, he was reinstated as vassal king of Chiang Râi.[241] The story of Phrachâo Phrom or King Phrom in the TS is a reference to the well-known theme in the Sihinganidāna in which Mahâ Phrom of Chiang Râi led an expedition against the king of Kamphèngphet, Ayutthayâ's vassal, demanding the hand-over of the sacred Sihing "Lion" Buddha.[242] There must have been some fighting before Kamphèngphet surrendered the image to Mahâ Phrom, but Mahâ Phrom had to retreat when troops were sent by the Ayutthayan king to expel him.

King Phrom of the TS is said to have stopped his campaign against the "Krǫm" at Kamphèngphet as a result of the God Indra's intervention, and he had to return to Yônok. Indra's intervention on behalf of the "Krǫm" is of course a euphemism for failure. Significantly, the "Krǫm=Khmer" equation does not apply here, as the war was actually between the Tai Yuan and the Siamese, not as forever claimed by later Thai nationalists between the Tai and the Khmer. The most likely explanation concerning this mix-up can only be sought in connection with tamnân historiography. The authors of the TS and another tamnân history, the Tamnân Suwanna Khôm Kham were confused by the existence of two Kambojas, one situated to the west and the other to the south of Yônok. By their reckoning, it would

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241) PTLT/I: 273; Notton, op.cit.: 89

242) See synopsis of this religious tamnân pp.91-5 above.

be absurd to have two Kambojas, and a myth was needed to account for the Kamboja of North Thailand and the Shan States. The author of the Tamnân Suwanna Khôm Kham employed the usual technique of Buddha's prophecy, foretelling the arrival of the son of the king of Inthapat (a classical name for Angkor) who would found the city of Suwanna Khôm Kham. The divergence from other tamnân is that, in the Tamnân Suwanna Khôm Kham, it is the first Buddha of this world-system who uttered the prediction, and the arrival of the Khmer Prince was to take place during the life-time of Konāgama, the second Buddha.[243] In this way, the presence of the "Krǫm", or "Khrǫm", and Kamboja in the extreme north of Thailand could be solved independently of the Shan tradition, which was no longer understood. In actual fact, there is hardly any trace of Khmer archaeological remains farther north than the Sukhôthai area.[244] In the final analysis, one has to conclude that none of the tamnân of the distant past is a reliable source of factual history, although these tamnân contributed most to the traditional Tai perception of the past until very recently.

VIII

Some Southern Tamnân and the Siamese Perception of the Past

Up till the reign of King Mongkut (1851-68), the Siamese perception of the past was influenced by many tamnân traditions. Unlike the Tai Yuan of Chiang Mai, the Siamese, who occupied the Mènâm Châophrayâ basin, were well-exposed to Khmer institutional influence. But like the Tai Yuan, who incorporated the Lâo Chok tradition into their own tamnân, and saw the na-

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243) Notton, Annales du Siam, I,: 103
244) Coedès, Indianized State: 137

tive inhabitants as their ancestors, the Siamese, as late as the seventeenth century A.D., believed that their early kings were closely related to the first khmer king.

The first detailed account of Ayutthayâ, which was written by Ma Huan, a Chinese traveller at the beginning of the fifteenth century, states that the Ayutthayan king "is of the So-li race".[245] J.V.G. Mills footnotes this reference with the explantion that the king "was of Indian descent".[246] This guesswork is undoubtedly without foundation. The word "So-li" recalls and obviously was Ma Huan's rendering of "Suriyawong" in the Sukhôthai inscriptions of the fourteenth century, and of "Suryavarman" of Khmer epigraphy. The "Surya-" element means "Sun". In both cases, what was intended was "Solar Dynasty". In popular belief of late C17th Ayutthayâ, the first Siamese king was said to be "Pra Poat honne souritep".[247] This was perhaps de la Loubère's French rendering of "Phra Pathom Suriyathep" (lit. "The First Sun King"). According to the Khamhaikân and the Chunlayutthakârawong, the first Khmer king was called Pathum /Pathom?/ Suriyawong, also "The Sun King", and he ruled in Inthapat (Angkor), whereas his offspring were founders of the various towns in Siam.[248] This "Sun King" in Siamese popular tales was undoubtedly King Suryavarman I (1002-50), who had put an end to the Mon kingdom of Dvāravatī and imposed Khmer administration on the Mènâm basin in the eleventh century. The Siamese perhaps migrated

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245) Ma Huan, op.cit.: 103
246) ibid.: 103fn.5
247) De la Loubère, op.cit.: 8
248) Khamhaikân: 11; PP/66, Khurusaphâ ed., vol. 41: 43-5

into central Thailand in small bands from the Khôrât Plateau via Lopburî.[249] In their new surroundings, the Siamese would naturally absorb Khmer traditions with ease, even after they had liberated themselves from the Khmer.

The Siamese tamnân were also varied and came from different sources. An important tradition originated in the reign of King Prâsâtthong (1629-56), as a result of a mix-up of two local traditions: the legends of Prathum Suriyawong and Thâo U-Thong, the latter being usually associated with Râmâthibodî, founder of Ayutthayâ. Jeremias van Vliet, author of the Short History of the King of Siam (1640), recorded a tamnân tradition that Thâo U-Thong was the one who built Nakhon Luang (Angkor Thom), and another that "the above-mentioned city was so exquisite and ingenious that no human being could possibly have built it. Therefore, they say that angels from heaven came to help in building this magnificent city in Cambodia".[250] The beliefs that Prathum Suriyawong was the first king of Angkor, and that the city of Angkor (Inthapat) was created by God Indra, were held by the Ayutthayan people in the eighteenth century, and Prathum Suriyawong had become one with U-Thong, whose name is given by Khamhâikân as Râmâthibodî Sî Suriya Prathum Suriyawong.[251] It is quite possible that the merger of these two legendary figures into one provided King Prâsâtthong with the needed casus belli to bring Cambodia under Siamese overlordship. The Short History says that because of this fact "ever since then the Siamese kings have claimed to

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249) Hiram Woodward, op.cit.: 44-5
250) van Vliet, op.cit.: 60
251) Khamhaikân: 58

be the highest governing power and authority over Cambodia".[252]

The tamnân stories of the first Siamese king are numerous, but basically one can put them into three categories: (1) Buddhist legends, i.e. Buddha was the first Siamese king;[253] (2) a group of legends in Upper Siam centring upon a cult-hero of Sukhôthai named Phra Ruang; (3) the legends of Thâo U-Thong, first king of Ayutthayâ. We can safely ignore the fruitless claim that Buddha was the first Siamese king, and concentrate on certain aspects of the tamnân of Phra Ruang and Thâo U-Thong.

Phra Ruang of Sukhôthai

Most people know of the various versions of the legend of Phra Ruang from these sources: the Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Nû'a, "History of Northern Siam", compiled by Phra Wichianprîchâ, in 1807; the C18th Khamhaikân Chão Krung Kao, a document discovered by the British occupying forces at Mandalay in 1886; and the Chunlayutthakârawong, probably a mid-C19th work of c. the Prince-Monk Paramânuchit, which is to be found in PP/66.[254] There are odd references to the name Phra Ruang in other chronicles of Lân-Nâ Thai. All of the historical documents mentioned, however, are without exception late compilations. It is worth noting that neither Jeremias van Vliet nor Simon de la Loubère ever relate any version of the legend of Phra Ruang in their detailed C17th accounts of the history of Siam. For our purposes I shall cite the three best-known versions of the legend of Phra Ruang.

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252) van Vliet, op.cit.: 60
253) ibid.: 55
254) Khurusaphâ edition, vols. 40, 41

A. Phra Ruang Arunnakumân: A Synopsis

Phra Ruang was born as a result of a union between a king of Hariphunchai named Phrayâ Aphaikhâmanî and a Nāga (Serpent King)'s daughter in B.E. 500. When grown up, he was given the city of Sî Satchanâlai to rule. In B.E. 1000, he was 50 years old, and was so powerful that people presented him with an image of a black-tusked white elephant. In that year he wanted to abolish the old era and introduce a new one, buth the Chinese emperor did not come to the assembly. So Phra Ruang decided to go to China with his brother, Ritthikumân. The story thereafter is full of miracles.

> "They sailed for one month before they reached China And the day they arrived a miracle occurred: a mist fell and the moon and the sun could not be seen and everywhere all the Chinese people's hair stood on end. They were greatly alarmed and shaken."

The Chinese emperor sent his official to investigate. This Chinese official knew of the Buddha's prophecy made for his country that there would be two Thai brothers who would sail across the seas in search of a wife, that one of them would become the ruler of the people of JambudÎpa, and that he would change the era of the Buddha after which he would reach China.

The Chinese emperor, knowing of the arrival of Phra Ruang, came to salute him. He brought his daughter and presented her to Phra Ruang as his wife, in virtue of the fact that this princess had performed meritorious deeds with him in a previous existence by creating the three Tipitaka in the religion of Kakusandha, the first Buddha. The Chinese emperor then divided a dragon-seal into two parts, and gave the tail portion to his daughter. Phra Ruang returned with his Chinese queen and 500 Chinese servants. Having settled down at the town of Sî Satchanâlai, the Chinese set about making pottery for the Sovereign and from that time forwards dated the practice of making royal pottery at Sî Satchanâlai (Sawankhlok).

Source: Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Nû'a in PP/1

B. Phra Ruang, the "Submerged" King: A Synopsis

A king of Sukhôthai named Sîthammâsôkkarât had sexual intercourse with a female Nāga. Before he left her behind he gave her a ring and a piece of red cloth. Soon Phra Ruang was born of that female Nāga's egg. Phra Ruang was a man of magical powers. He became a monk at a time when all the principalities of Siam were Cambodia's dependencies. His reputation as a magical man reached the king of Cambodia, and the latter wanted to get rid of him. The king of Cambodia sent one of his men to kill Phra Ruang. This Khmer spy went through the earth and appeared at Sukhôthai asking for Phra Ruang without realizing that the monk he conversed with was Phra Ruang himself. Phra Ruang told him to wait and turned the Khmer spy into stone. Thus the Siamese were freed from Khmer domination, and did not pay tribute to the Khmer king any longer.

Phra Ruang built the city of Sî Satchanâlai at the old site where a relic of Buddha's was deposited, but the new town was to be known also as Sawankhalôk.

King Sîthammâsôkkarât died in B.E. 1800 or C.S. 619 when Phra Ruang was only 12 years old. Phra Ruang appointed his half-brother, Phrayâ Sîthammarâchâ, king of Sawankhalôk, and he proceeded to Sukhôthai. On his way there he desired to renovate a temple and have it adorned with Chinese mosaic, so he went to China for some potters.

Phra Ruang was given a Chinese princess in marriage. This Chinese princess was called Nâng Khanthârarât (Gandhārarāja). The Chinese princess bore Phra Ruang a son named Chân Râm. At the age of 92 Phra Ruang went away and soon disappeared into the water.

Source: Chunlayutthakârawong Khwâm Riang in PP/66

C. Phra Ruang Version III: A Synopsis

In C.S. 536 a king named Suriyarâchâ ruled at Phichit. This king died in C.S. 570 and was succeeded by his son, Chanthakumân. Later Chanthakumân founded the city of Sukhôthai. One day, he went out hunting and met a beautiful women.

They fell in love and had a pleasant union. It turned out this beautiful woman was in fact a female Nāga, who had just come up from her undersea world. They parted but afterwards the Nāga laid an egg as big as a coconut shell in the orchard of an old couple. The boy that came out of the egg orchard was Phra Ruang, and was reared by the old husband and wife.

At the age of 15, Phra Ruang displayed his magical powers so that his reputation spread to the king's court. The king then realized that Phra Ruang was his own son born of the Nāga queen.

At Sukhôthai, Phra Ruang asked his father to discontinue sending "water" tribute to the king of Inthapat (Angkor). The Khmer king commonded his son to attack the town of Sukhôthai. Phra Ruang came out to fight and finally defeated the Khmer, so Sukhôthai was no longer Angkor's vassal.

Chantharâchâ died in C.S. 576, and Phra Ruang succeeded him. Phra Ruang rebuilt the city of Sawankhalôk and ruled there.

Source: Khamhaikân Châo Krung Kao & Chunlayutthakârawong

There is not doubt that the Phra Ruang of these folk-tales was a king of Sukhôthai, and that these accounts contain some elements of history. There is, however, a difficulty in identifying Phra Ruang with any of the historical kings of Sukhôthai, because such a name does not exist in the inscription of Sukhôthai prior to the sixteenth century. Moreover, the earliest mention of "Phrayâ Ruang" in Tai epigraphy is to be found in the inscription of Wat Sî Umông Kham, Phayao, erected in 1503.[255] The next reference to "Pû Phrayâ Ruang" is inscribed on the pedestal of the Siva image of Kamphèngphet made in 1510.[256] The last inscription that contains the re-

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255) PSč/IV: No. 105, F.2/3&5/122
256) PSč/I: No. 13, l.3/146

ference to "Phrayâ Ruang" is that of Wat Chiang Man at Chiang Mai, which was set up in 1581.[257] The provenance of these inscriptions would suggest that the legend of Phra Ruang had already become widely known at the beginning of the sixteenth century in Upper Siam and Lân-Nâ Thai. There is hardly any clue as regards the origin of the name Phra Ruang, but this has to be sought in the North. Ruang is most likely to be a variation of "Châo Luang", a common title of the kings of Lân-Nâ Thai/Chiang Mai, as phonetically 'r' and 'l' are interchangable in the Tai languages.[258] Equally possible is the fact that Ruang was a name derived from Rung, and Rung was a Siamese rendering of Hung,[259] a cult-hero of many ethnic groups of Upper Burma, North Thailand and Laos.

Disregarding the confusing accounts of the three versions above, one can see clearly that the references to this legendary king of Sukhôthai in the tamnân tradition of the North represented in the inscription of Wat Chiang Man (1581), the Jinakālamālī, and the Sihiṅganidāna, were clearly made with King Râmkhamhèng in mind. However, Prince Damrong and King Wachirâwut in the early C20th were inclined towards the less reliable accounts of the Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Nû'a (Phra Ruang Version A) and the Chunlayutthakârawong (Phra Ruang Version II & III), which were compiled only in the early Bangkok period. Prince Damrong believed that Phra Ruang was King Sî Intharâthit, and that it was also a generic term.[260] King

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257) PSČ/III: No. 76, F.1/3/210
258) Cf. Prachâkit, PY: 80
259) Again, glottal stop 'h' in Tai Yuan becomes 'r' in Siamese.
260) Damrong, "Tamnân Nangsü..": 128-9

Wachirâwut identified Phra Ruang with King Sî Intharâthit because Version B and C say he was the Siamese king who defeated the Khmer general, and this historical fact is confirmed by an inscription of Sukhôthai.[261]

From an historiographical point of view, Phra Ruang is another cult-hero in Thai history. Many themes in Versions A, B, and C. are easily identifiable, and the legend of Phra Ruang was a mélange of foreign as well as local traditions. Again, anyone familiar with the Great Chronicle of Ceylon, the Mahāvamsa, should recognize immediately that Aphaikhâmanî (father of Phra Ruang in V.A) was a corruption of Duṭhagāmanī, the Ceylonese king, who sponsored the Fourth Buddhist Council. The egg culture, i.e. a human king's intercourse with a female Nāga which resulted in a magical boy born of the latter's egg, is a common theme in Shan histories as well as in Burman thamaing,[262] so it was not unique to the Siamese. There is at least one story in Mon folk-tales associating powerful kings with Nāga worship; King Kyanzittha (1084-1112) of Pagan, for example, was believed to be a Nāga son.[263]

What has had the most sensational implications for ancient Thai history is the belief that Phra Ruang went to China and brought back Chinese potters to Sukhôthai. Prince Damrong

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261) Wachirâwut, King, Pramuan Phra Borommarâchâthibâi Kiaokap Prawattisât Sayâm, "Essays and Comments on the History of Siam", Cremation volume for the funeral of Phrayâ Borihân Nakharin, 1953: 27

262) G.H. Luce and Pe Maung Tin, (tr.), The Glass Palace Chronicle of the Kings of Burma: 33-5; Maung Htin Aung, Folk Tales of Burma, New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1976: 86-88; W.W. Cochrane, The Shan, Rangoon, 1915: 53-9

263) Janice Stargardt, "Social and Religious Aspects of Royal Power in Medieval Burma: From Inscriptions of Kyanzittha's Reign, 1084-1112", JESHO, 13, 3 (Nov. 1970): 294, 297

identified this Phra Ruang with King Râmkhamhèng. Checking against a misleading Thai translation of the Yuan Shih, Prince Damrong was convinced that King Râmkhamhèng had visited China twice.[264] His statement was followed uncritically by W.A.R. Wood, author of A History of Siam in 1926. Since then it has become an "historical" fact in standard textbooks on the history of Thailand. Two Sinologists, E. Thadeus Flood and Suebsaeng Promboon, have recently categorically refuted any such claim on the grounds that the Yuan Shih never mentions the visit of any Sukhôthai king.[265] Furthermore, the dating of the Sangkhalôk (Sawankhalôk?) China wares has come under close scrutiny; one authority believes the kiln sites where the Sangkhalôk ceramics were produced were probably established sometime after 1350, long after the reign of Râmkhamhèng.[266] A glance at the ceramics of Sukhôthai retrieved from the capsized junks in the Gulf of Siam reveals that the early fifteenth century represented the peak of the production of the Sangkhalôk wares. They are almost likely to have been exported by Ayutthayâ to other countries in South-East Asia. The sending of diplomatic missions to China by the Ayutthayan court intensified between 1340 and 1429, and the relationship between Siam and China was particularly cordial.[267] This close tie is even reflected in a Siamese legend that U-Thong, founder of Ayutthayâ, was the Chinese emperor's son.[268] As a matter of fact, the Siamese

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264) Damrong, Prince, "Introduction", PP/5: 53fn.2
265) Flood, op.cit.; Cf. Suebsaeng, op.cit.
266) Carol Stratton & Miriam McNair Scott, op.cit.: 118
267) Suebsaeng, op.cit.: Ch. 4
268) Jeremias van Vliet, op.cit.: 55-7

élite of the early Ayutthayâ period were admirers of Chinese art and architecture.[269] The flourishing pottery trade, if there ever was any, reached its peak after Ayutthayâ had become the dominant city-state in the lower Mènâm basin.

Prince Damrong's judgement was based solely on the Chunlayutthakârawong, and on this shaky basis his interpretation concerning Râmkhamhèng's visits to China is not sustainable. The basic theme of Phra Ruang Version B and C was borrowed from the Shan histories, probably via the Burmese. There is a legend in the Shan States of Sèn Wi relating the story of a Shan prince who was born of a Nāga king's daughter and was brought up by an elderly couple. At the age of 15 or 16, he went to China (actually Yunnan), and with some help from his Nāga mother he got the Chinese emperor's daughter as wife.[270] This story recurred in other tamnân stories of Upper Siam too.[271] Once ther exist many versions of the same story, it is impossible to believe that one version is truer than the others.

Thâo Sèn Pom, Chaisiri, and Thâo Ū-Thong

The Ayutthayan view of ancient history centred upon three characters: Thâo Sèn Pom, King Chaisiri, and Thâo Ū-Thong. Since none of the extant copies of the tamnân under discussion predates the early Bangkok period, one has to conclude that they are not entirely authoritative or trustworthy. Although these three characters belonged to different traditions in the Ayutthayâ period, they were related in late eighteenth-century compilations. It is not difficult to trace the origins of

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269) See Chapter II of this thesis.
270) Scott & Hardiman, op.cit.: 229-30; see also fn.262
271) See stories in the Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Nû'a in PP/1

these folk-tales.

Thâo Sèn Pom

In a recent study of the folk-tales of the Kamphèngphet area, Siriphan Thîrasarichôt found that about ten different versions of the legend of Thâo Sèn Pom had been transmitted through the generations.[272] The core of this legend is the "gardener who became king". This theme was of course not unique to Upper Siam but quite common in Burmese and Khmer chronicular traditions.[273] The possibility is that the theme of the "gardener who became king" was passed from the Burmese via the Siamese to the Khmer. In the Burmese and Khmer folk-tales, the gardener killed an unjust king who trespassed in his orchard, so he was chosen king by the people. In the Siamese tales, Sén Pom was an ugly man who earned his living by growing vegetables. He urinated always on the creepers of an egg-plant in his orchard. It happened that the king's daughter wanted to eat an egg-plant, and sent one of her waiting-ladies for it. Having eaten it, she became pregnant and later gave birth to a baby boy. When the child was three years old, the king assembled all male subjects in his principality and let the child identify his father. The young child went to Sèn Pom, the most ugly man in the kingdom. The king felt embarrassed so he expelled the three from his kingdom. Indra intervened by

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272) Siriphan Thirasarichôt, "RŪ'ang Thâo Sén Pom Châk Mû'ang Kamphèngphet" (The Various Versions of the Thâo Sén Pom Story), SP, 21, 1 (May 1977): 70-99

273) G.H. Luce and Pe Maung Tin, op.cit.: 58; PP/71, Khurusaphâ edition, vol. 45 (Chronicle of Cambodia): 59-93

disguising himself as a bedraggled monkey. He let himself be caught by Sèn Pom, and then redeemed himself by giving a magical drum to Sèn Pom and telling him that should he desire anything, what he needed to do was to strike the drum, First, he struck the drum in order that the ugly scars would disappear from all over his body. Second, he struck the drum for a gold cot (û thọng) in which his son would sleep. Lastly, in C.S. 681 (A.D. 1319) "Year of the Horse", he struck the magical drum for a city to rise. From sleeping in the gold cot, his son was called Ū-Thọng. The city he ruled was named "Theppha Nakhọn" (City of Angels). Sèn Pom then assumed the title of "Somdet Phrachâo Sirichai Chiang Sèn". S.P. Sirichai Chiang Sèn died in C.S. 706 (A.D. 1344) and was succeeded by Ū-Thọng, who transferred the capital to Nọng Sanô and built the city of Ayutthayâ in C.S. 712 (A.D. 1350).

The above summary is made from Prince-Monk Paramânuchit's Abridged Chronicle of Ayutthayâ[274] and the Chunlayutthakâ-rawong.[275] The Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Nû'a and the Khamhaikân Châo Krung Kao, which are earlier compilations, contain no story whatsoever of Thâo Sèn Pom. It does not feature in Jeremias van Vliet's Short History of the Kings of Siam (1640) or Simon de la Loubère's Siam (c. 1688). The evidence points to the fact that the Abridged Chronicle of Ayutthayâ is the first historical writing to have synthesized the three originally differing traditions: (1) the TS tradition, (2) the "gardener who became king" tradition, and (3) the

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274) Paramânuchit Chinôrot, Prince-Monk, The Abridged Chronicle of Ayutthayâ, Bangkok, 1863: 1-3
275) PP/66, Khurusaphâ edition, vol. 41: 23-43, 67-70

Ū-Thǫng tradition; but it was confusingly done.

Chaisiri

If the TS/PP61 had existed at Ayutthayâ during the first half of the seventeenth century, it would not have escaped the intense curiosity of Jeremias van Vliet, who recounted many Siamese legends in 1640. According to his Short History, the conviction of the Siamese in his time was that Ū-Thǫng was of Chinese descent.[276] But from De la Loubère's account, we have the impression that the Siamese perception of the past had changed by the 1680's.

According to De la Loubère, the first Siamese king was called Pra Poat Honne Surittep pennaratui sonanne bopitra (Phra Prathom Suriyathep...). This king ruled at a place called Tchai pappe Mahanacon (Chaiprâkân Mahânakhǫn) in B.E. 1300. The tenth king named Ipoja Sanne Thora Thesma Teperat (?) moved his capital to a place called Tasoo Nacora Louang (Phrathât Nakhǫn Luang, possibly Lampâng, usually called Nakhǫn). The twelfth king after this was Pra Pao Noome Thele şeri (Phra Phanom Chaisiri). This king migrated down to Nakhǫn Thai in B.E. 1731 and finally settled down at Pipili (Phetchaburî). The fourth king after him was Ū-Thǫng, who is said to have founded Ayutthayâ in B.E. 1894.[277]

The outline of the early history of the Siamese as told by court officials to De la Loubère during his visit to the Siamese capital in 1687-88, is interesting because it reveals the influence of the North upon Siamese historiography. One must bear in mind that in 1662, Lân-Nâ Thai fell into Siamese hands, and the period after that saw a new impetus to the literary scene at the court of King Nârâi. In the meanwhile,

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276) See fn. 267
277) De la Loubère, op.cit.: 8

the Siamese had taken up some historical traditions normally associated with the North. Tchai pappe (Chaiprâkân) is the capital of Phrommakumân of the TS who expelled the "Klǫm" from Yônarattha. Chaisiri is again the name of the Tai Yuan king who, in the TS, fled before the troops of the king of Suthammawadi (Thaton) in B.E. 1000. According to De la Loubère's account, Chaisiri came down to Nakhǫn Thai from Upper Siam in B.E. 1731. This represents a difference of 731 years. It is hardly surprising if one realizes that most tamnân were essentially dateless, and the compilers can arrange dates of events to fit in with their framework.[278] But a remarkable thing is that U-Thǫng was said to be the fourth king after Chaisiri, and not his son and successor. In later versions, as we have already seen, the name Chaisiri became Sirichai; U-Thǫng's father.

The late Khačhǫn Sukhaphânit, a repected Thai historian, was of the opinion that the legend of Thâo Sèn Pom as preserved by the Chunlayutthakârawong and the Abridged Chronicle of Ayutthayâ belonged to the same tradition as the story of Phra Phanom Chaisiri recorded in De la Loubère's account.[279] According to Khačhǫn, "the Chunlayutthakârawong mentions specifically that B.E. 1731 was the year in which Mû'ang Traitrúng was founded. B.E. 1731 is important because another early source (De la Loubère's) also mentions this date and relates

278) M. Vickery, "Review Article: A New Tamnân..", op.cit.: 170

279) Khačhǫn Sukhaphânit, "Panhâ Kân Kǫ Tang Krung Sî Ayutthayâ Pen Râtchathânî" (Some Questions Relating to the Founding of Ayutthayâ as the Siamese Capital) in Wutthichai Mûnlasin, (ed.), Khǫmûn Prawattisât Samai Ayutthayâ: 3

the same story, namely, the migration of the forefathers of the Siamese from the North to the South, which took place in that very year".[280] I have checked these sources carefully and find that neither the Abridged Chronicle of Ayutthayâ nor the Chunlayutthakârawong (in Pali), nor the Thetsanâ Chunlayutthakârawong (in Thai) contains the date B.E. 1731. The TS/PP61 gives B.E. 1000 as the date for King Chaisiri's retreat from Yonarattha (Chiang Râi). The Ayutthayan people in the second half of the seventeenth century perhaps adopted the TS/PP61 as their own tamnân, as they believed that one of their earlier kings came from the North and was called Chaisiri. When the Abridged Chronicle of Ayutthayâ and the Chunlayutthakârawong were compiled in the early nineteenth century, the story had already been modified; the name Chaisiri became Sirichai, and Sirichai was presented as the ugly man who was married into the family of the Siamese king who had come from the North.

Thâo Ù-Thọng

From van Vliet's Short History (1640), the Phongsâwadân Mûang Nû'a (1807), the Khamhaikân Châo Krung Kao (late C18th), the Abridged Chronicle, and the Chunlayutthakârawong (c. C19th), seven versions of the story of Thâo Ù Thọng can be cited. Of these, two from van Vliet's Short History are of particular interest.

Version I: Synopsis

About 2,000 years ago, a son of the emperor of China was exiled from the country because he had tried to murder his father and seize the kingdom. After a series of wanderings, this Chinese prince and his retinue finally landed at a site

280) ibid.

called the Hook of Kui in the Bay of Siam. After he had the land spied out by several of his men, who discovered that it was fruitful but sparsely populated, the Chinese prince resolved to develop the Siamese land in order to extend his authority.[281)]

Version II: Synopsis

More than 300 years ago there was a king of several provinces in China (whose name, however, were unknown to the Siamese). This king had a son named Châo Ui who was so lustful that he violated the wives of almost all the mandarins of the kingdom, and those whom he could not coerce were secretly murdered. The mandarins complained about this matter to the king. They threatened to depose and kill the king if the latter refused to put his son to death. The king gave in but the queen (mother of the accused) asked for mercy on her son's behalf saying that it would be best to send him out of the country. The king consented and informed the mandarins, who agreed to this.

The king had many junks outfitted and supplied the prince and his followers with food, ammunition, and everything necessary for a long voyage. The prince intended to settle down wherever the gods and winds should take him. The elder son of the king accompanied his brother because he loved him.

Quite by chance the aforementioned Châo Ui appeared with his fleet at Pattanî, where he landed with his people. But since he found it to be a populated city, he did not wish to stay there, but travelled several miles inland to Ulu Pattanî. He established himself there and founded a city

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281) See fn. 167

called Langkâsuka... ... Later he went overland to what is now called Ligor. Since it was only woods and wilderness, he founded a city there and called it Ligor. He went forth to Kui and built a town there. At Kui two Chinese junks came. Chão Ui presented them with as much sappanwood as their two junks could carry. They left for China fully pleased. The Chinese king was so delighted that he gave one of his daughters called Nâng Pačham Thọng to Chão Ui in marriage. He then sent her off with great pomp and conferred the title Thâo Ū-Thọng upon Chão Ui.

Thâo Ū-Thọng in the meantime founded the city of Phet-chaburī. He left the Chinese religion and accepted that of the Siamese. He further built the cities of Chongh, Cout-Thiam and Bangkok. Finally he moved to the 'island' of Ayutthayâ where he met a ṛsī. By clever trick, he threw the hermit into the pool called Bọ Talèngkèng in which the Nāga king lived.

Jeremias van Vliet informs us that he had heard most of the Siamese histories from Buddhist monks.[282] It is not difficult to recognize that they were presented in the tamnân fashion, and these Ū-Thọng stories could hardly be authentic. The whole structure of Version II was borrowed from an episode in the Mahāvaṃsa. In the Great Chronicle of Ceylon, Prince Vijaya, eldest son of the Lion-Prince, led an unbridled way of life, and violated the wives of his father's noblemen. The noblemen threatened to kill him and his followers, so the Lion-Prince banished them from his city. Prince Vijaya had to set sail. As he came in the southern direction, he landed

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282) Van Vliet, op.cit.: 54

at Langkâ. The mention of Langkâsuka in the legend of Thâo Ū-Thong is significant because this obscure kingdom did exist between the third and twelfth century A.D. The name Langkâ-suka is most likely to have derived from a combination of "Laṅkā" and "Asoka".[283] In some Malay Annals, Langkâsula was in the Kedah-Pattanī area, but strangely enough, no mention of it is made in the Siamese documents. The C17th Siamese must have had some vague knowledge of it, and seen it as part of the transferred Buddhist geography, Siam being the Jambudīpa, and Langkâsula "Laṅkā" or Ceylon.

What concerns us here is the proof that the earlier versions of the legend of Thâo Ū-Thọng are fantastic; the theme of the prince "who violated the mandarins' wives" can also be found in another Siamese tamnân.[284] We may assume that some other variations which maintain that Thâo Ū-Thọng came from Phetchaburī belong to the same tradition as Version II. The later compilations which associate Thâo Ū-Thọng with Chaisirī and the TS/PP/61 obviously represent the late seventeenth-century attempt at synthetic history. Version II provides us with a folk-etymology concerning the name of Thâo Ū-Thọng. This means that the Siamese, even at the beginning of the seventeenth century, did not understand the name of this legendary king. Probably, its origin was Mọn; a certain Phayâ Ū is said by the Slapat Rājawaṅ Datow Smin Roṅ

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283) H.G. Quaritch Wales, "Lankasuka and Tambralinga: Some Archaeological Notes", JMBRAS, 47, 1 (Jul.1974): 22

284) Ọng Waikamlang, "Tamnân Phra Prathôn Chédī", in Fine Art Department, Rû'ang Phra Pathomma Chédī, "History of the Pathomma Chédī", Special volume for the funeral of Khunmè Wọn Sâtraphan, Bangkok, 16 April 1963: 8

(Mon Chronicle) to have become king of Martaban in C.S. 710 (A.D. 1348), almost the same year as Râmâthibodî founded and became king of Ayutthaya.[285]

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285) R. Halliday, (tr.), "Slapat Rājawan Datow Smin Ron: A History of Kings", JBRS, 13, 1 (1923): 52

CHAPTER II

The Phongsâwadân: The Dynastic Chronicles

It has been pointed out that, whereas the tamnân were written by scholar-monks as popular histories with the purpose of preaching certain Buddhist doctrines to the people, the phongsâwadân were written by court scholars to bolster the image of the reigning dynasty. Being part of court culture, a phongsâwadân history was considered the emblem of royalty. It was the dominant mode of historical writing in Siam until the mid- 19th century. It is also regarded by historians as a chief source of Siam's political history. I shall place the emphasis in this chapter on four aspects of the phongsâwadân historiography: (1) the phongsâwadân as a source of legitimacy and justification of the royal power; (2) the phongsâwadân as a referential work; (3) the influence of the Chinese historiographical tradition in Siam; and the main section (4) the compilation of the various Phrarâtcha-phongsâwadân Krung Si Ayutthayâ, the Ayutthayâ as well as the Bangkok recensions. In the last section I shall discuss also the literary trend of the first reign of the Bangkok period which gave the impetus to the recompilation of the Chronicle of Ayutthayâ. All these aspects will provide the reader with a basic understanding of the phongsâwadân historiography and its implications in traditional Siam. It is to be seen that, all the Ayutthayan phongsâwadân histories, the earlier versions, i.e. LP/1680 and 2/k.125 Fragment, and C.S.1136, contain a framework of factual history, whereas the Bangkok recensions are full of misplaced interpolations.

I

The Phongsâwadân as a Source of Legitimacy and Justification for the Royal Power

As we have seen in the foregoing pages, a tamnân writer would use his work as a means of teaching moral lessons by way of historical examples, with a strong emphasis on the working of the kamma and the doctrine of impermanence. The genesis of the phongsâwadân was however secular in nature; compilers of the phongsâwadân would do their best to glorify the semi-divine attributes of their kings. For this important reason the phongsâwadân were a major concern of the reigning king, especially if he happened to be a usurper. The compilation of a new version of the phrarâtchaphongsâwadân, "Dynastic Chronicle", was with little doubt a process of legitimization for a new king, or rather a new dynasty.

The phongsâwadân -and similarly the dynastic chronicles of the others Theravada kingdoms of South-East Asia, i.e. Burma, Cambodia, and Laos- had a specific rôle to play with regard to the position of the royal family; the main purpose of the phongsâwadân was not simply to record the genealogies of kings, but more importantly to dramatize and extol their activities in order to legitimize their rule. With this in mind, it would not help and perhaps be unfair to judge these dynastic chronicles by the yardstick of modern scholarship. Reading through the pages of these indigenous sources, one can hardly help becoming vexed by their content and style. A prominent scholar of South-East Asia once made an observation about the Burmese chronicles, which applies also to

the Siamese phongsâwadân:-

> Burmese historians are notorious for their turn for exaggeration, for vaunting their national prowess and glory, and for the devotion of their pages to the achievements of the members of the royal family.... Their writings are mere records of court intrigues, bloodshed, tyranny, oppression, the number of people killed, and of villages destroyed. To them their kings are superhuman beings.... they use their turn for undeserved adulation to laud their patrons to the skies at the expense of truth, and that foreigners should be cautious in following them and sifting historical truth from exaggeration, plain unadorned truth from allegories,..[1)]

The purpose and narrative style of these dynastic chronicles make it inevitable that they should contain instances of hyperbolic statements. Many "facts" of course cannot be taken literally; and "10,000 troops", for example, means simply a great number of men. The outcome of "court intrigues, bloodshed, tyranny, oppression, the number of people killed" and so on, is presented by the compilers in terms of Buddhist philosophy, that is, the working out of kamma consequences of the past. The Orientals are fatalistic; the fall of a promising king is due to the fact that "his store of merit had suddenly become exhausted", and a usurper can be crowned king because he "possessed the unrivalled merit worthy of a king". In this sense, the writing of the phongsâwadân is influenced by the religious tamnân. Significantly, the Siamese attitude towards change is summed up quite fatalistically in an old adage, "Lèw tèh bun kam nam pai" (Let past merit and

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1) Taw Sein Ko, Burmese Sketches, I,: 278

demerit lead you along the unknown path). This attitude, indeed, has always left room for a man of modest background to rise to the highest position in Siamese society. The contest for the throne of Ayutthayâ was the resolution of the kamma of the claimants. It is interesting to note that the succession of the kings of Ayutthayâ was very irregular; of the thirty-three reigns, only twenty ended by natural causes; seven kings were murdered; four were deposed; and the rest had to seek refuge and safety in a monastery. When a king passed away leaving a young and feeble heir behind, a succession crisis was bound to follow. Out of the turmoil emerged a victorious claimant whose right to the throne had to be justified. Often the phongsâwadân compilers contrived to gloss over this legitimacy problem by having the rightful heirs or members of the old dynasty hasten to relinquish their claim because the most powerful claimant at the time had accumulated a greater measure of merit from past kamma-actions.[2)]

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2) For example, Somdet Phra Phetrâchâ (1688-1703) is said to have been infuriated by his son, Luang Sorasak's misconduct, so he appointed one of his nephews, Chão Phra Phichaisurin, heir-apparent, despite the fact that Luang Sorasak was already holding the rank of the Prince of the Front Palace, and was de facto next in line to the throne. Following Somdet Phra Phetrâchâ's death, the young felt insecure as he had no power-base. He carried the five emblems of regalia to the Prince of the Front Palace, relinquished his claims to the throne, and begged Luang Sorasak to accept the throne on the grounds that:-

> I, your loyal servant, possess a tiny amount of fortune and influence. My merit is far from great; my power lacked strength. Consequently, I can never rule successfully. If I were to succeed to the throne, the royal possessions, the kingdom, the monks, and the subjects would be in jeopardy. This nine-tiered White Parasol is the emblem of luck and blessedness; anyone who has not accumulated sufficient

In old Siam, the fount of royal authority was vested in both Brahmanistic rites and Buddhist traditions. The Brahman officiators employed by the court provided the Ayutthayan monarchy with an appearance of sanctity, perpetuated by the compulsory drinking of the water of allegiance twice annually by all officers of state whose duty required them to carry weapons.[3] However, the Buddhist notion of a sammutideva, "God-King by common consent", which is a tradition derived from the story of the first human king in the Buddhist cosmogony,[4] made it acceptable, if not obligatory, for an

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merit in past deeds cannot hope to maintain it. .. Your Royal Highness is endowed with luck, prowess, and unequalled merit. Your Royal Highness is worthy of the throne of the Thai kingdom.

The above quotation is taken from: Somdet Phra Wannarat of Wat Phra Chétuphon, Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ, "The Dynastic Chronicle of Ayutthayâ", Khlang Witthayâ edition, 1972: 553-4; Cf. Fine Art Department, Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sayâm, "The British Museum Recension of the Chronicle of Ayutthayâ", Kâo-Nâ edition, 1964:

3) This solemn ceremony had its origin in the Angkorean period. The Khmer inscription of Phimānakas of 1011 A.D. suggests it was instituted by Suryavarman I (1002-50). Hubert de Mestier du Bourg, "La première moitié du XI^{e} siècle au Cambodge: Sūryavarman I^{er}, sa vie et quelques aspects des institutions à son époque", JA, No. 258 (1970): 300-1

4) The story of the first human king is related in the Agganna-sutta in the DhIgha-Nikāya. It is believed by Buddhists that the first human beings were at first purely spiritual, but they gradually became more and more material, until passion and evil practices arose. Thereupon the people assembled, and chose the fairest and ablest to be their king. He became Mahāsammuta, the first king, and originator of the royal caste. His legitimate claim lies in the fact that he had been elected to rule, and attributed certain divine qualities. See Rhys Davids, (tr.), Dialogues of the Buddha, vol. IV: 88; E.J. Thomas, The Life of Buddas Legend and History, 1949: 4-5; Cf. J. Gonda, "Ancient Indian Kingship from the Religious Point of View", Numen, 3, 2 (Apr. 1956): 155

The story of Mahāsammuta is repeatedly told in the religious tamnân of Northern Thailand, but the name of this first king as given in the tamnân is usually "Samantarâchâ", which in Pali means "vassal king". How this came about will perhaps never be known.

outsider to be chosen king, once he had proved to be the most virtuous man in the whole kingdom. Accordingly, he must have had the best store of merit (bun). It must be pointed out that there was no definite law of succession in Siam until the eve of King Wachirâwut (1910-25)'s death. King Bǫromtrailôk (1448-88)'s Palatine Law of 1468?,[5] which was formulated with the purpose of specifying an individual's place in the Siamese social hierarchy, contains no clause guaranteeing that the throne should be passed to either the king's younger brother or son.

It is a fact that in Siam the compilation and revision of the phongsâwadân was done as part of a legitimizing process, and thus it was the king's major concern to make sure that the phongsâwadân did not fall into a state of disrepute from his point of view. Court historiographers contrived to present their royal masters in the best possible light. In the phongsâwadân one finds that the ancient Indian concept of "God-King", which was based on the Vedic treatises, the Arthaśāstra, and the Law of Manu, is submerged under the influence of the tamnân tradition, and this resulted in a religious syncretism that transformed the Ayutthayan kingship into a prominent Buddharāja type. The shift of emphasis in the phongsâwadân historiography occurred perhaps in the second half of the fifteenth century. There is a discernible

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5) The Palatine Law is dated 720 without any indication of the era used. "720, Rat Year" can neither be the Cula, "Lesser" or Mahāsaka, "Greater" eras (+638 and +78 = A.D. respectively). This date is therefore reckoned to be the little known Culāmanī era 720, Rat Year, which corresponds to A.D. 1468.
See D.K. Wyatt, "The Thai Kaṭa Mandiarpāla and Malacca", JSS, 55, 2 (Jul. 1967): 281-4

difference concerning the use of certain terms in the 2/k. 125 Fragment, the oldest Siamese phongsâwadân recension, and the later versions. In default of any known phongsâwadân history between the compilation of the fifteenth-century 2/k.125 Fragment and LP/1680, a gap of some two hundred years, any interpretation has to be speculative.

The compilation of the 2/k.125 Fragment, thought by Michael Vickery to date prior to King Bọrommatrailôk (1448-1488)'s administrative reform,[6] seems to have mirrored an aspect of the Hindu divine kingship still retained at the Ayutthayan court. King Bọrommarâchâ II (1424-48) was addressed by his subjects as "Phû Pen Châo" (Your Divine Majesty).[7] This expression can be found in many old Ayutthayan laws.[8] Although we do not have another earlier recension than the LP/1680, it is clear that in the LP/1680 and all the later detailed phongsâwadân the term often used to refer to the king is either Phra Phutthačhâo or Phra Phutthičhâo, "Your Majesty, the Enlightened One", i.e. the Buddha. Further, LP/1680 uses the term nipphân or narúphân (Pal.=nibbāna, and Sans.=nirvana) for the king when he died, implying he was an Embryo Buddha. It is possible that the earlier recensions of the phongsâwadân may have used the term nipphân, "enter the state of being extinguished", such as LP/1680, and it

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6) Michael Vickery, "The 2/k.125 Fragment: A Lost Chronicle of Ayutthaya", JSS, 65, 1 (Jan. 1977): 54

7) ibid.: 10, 22

8) Fine Art Department, Rû'ang Kotmâi Trâ Sâmduang, "Laws of Three Seals", 1978: see Phra Aiyakân Âtyâ Luang, "Law of Grave Crimes", dated B.E. 1895 (A.D. 1351): 475; Phra Aiyakân Laksana Chôn, "Law of Thievery", dated B.E. 1903 (A.D. 1359): 431; Phra Aiyakân Krabot Súk, "Law of Treason", dated C.S. 796 (A.D. 1434?): 529.

was only replaced by the term sawanrakhot, "gone to heaven", in later revisions. This is borne out by the fact that the word nipphân sometimes slipped through in the detailed phongsâwadân, such as the so-called Chakkraphatdiphong (Chât) Recension, copied at a later date.[9]

Probably the change in the emphasis from a Hindu "God-King" type to the Phuttharâchâ (Buddharāja) type was given an impetus by the rivalry between the Theravāda kings of South-East Asia in the mid-fifteenth century. At this time, Dhammačhédî of Pegu (1472-92) was purging the Mọn Saṅgha of bad elements, whereas under King Tilôk (1441-87), the orthodox Siṅhalese School had emerged victorious in the religious controversy against the old Mọn School at Chiang Mai, and at Ayutthayâ, Bọrommatrailôk (1448-88) was reportedly a patron of the orthodox "Wat Pâ Kèw" School.[10] LP/1680 implies that, in emulation of King Lithai of Sukhôthai before him, Bọrommatrailôk would not be outdone by his rivals, especially in the field of religious activities; in the abridged LP/1680 six entries for the reign of Bọrommatrailôk are about important Buddhist deeds.[11] Perhaps Bọrommatrailôk was ordained as a monk at Wat Čhulâmanî, in that capital, in 1465, also in emulation of Lithai, and became the first Ayutthayan monarch to be ordained whilst still reigning.[12]

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9) Fine Art Department, Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Chabap Phančhanthanumât (Cherm) Kap Phra Chakkraphatdiphong (Chât), Khlang Witthayâ edition, 1964: 935
10) Prince Damrong, "Athibâi Rû'ang Nai Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân" (An Explanation on the Various Recensions of the Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân) in Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Chabap Phrarâtcha Hatthalékhâ, "The Royal Autograph Recension of the Chronicle of Ayutthayâ, 1952: 431
11) LP/1680 in PP/1, Khurusaphâ ed., vol. 1: 136-8 See C.S. 820, 822, 826, 827, 844, and 846
12) ibid: 137

It is not unlikely that closer contact between Ceylon and the Tai kingdoms during the fifteenth century had actually brought the notion of Buddhist kingship to the fore, especially at Ayutthayâ, where the concept of monarchy had traditionally come under the influence of the Hindu-oriented cult of the "God-King". The change of emphasis even enhanced the prestige of the monarchy as an institution, but in the meantime, by retaining certain aspects of the Indian-derived kingship, the Siamese king could pose as the supreme ruler in whose person the essence of divine spiritual strength was believed to have been vested.[13] The king's merit (bun) as seen through the eyes of Buddhists, and his inviolabe divinity according to the Hindu-oriented kingship, made up a formidable force that governed the realm. The royal authority was absolute, and it had some magical significance too. The compiler of 2/k.125 Fragment, for example, made the vassal ruler of Chaliang (Sîsatchanâlai) tell Bǫrommarâchâ II that "My troops are rather weak; the people of Phrè and Nân have twenty thousand troops, and their elephants and horses are well looked after for war. If I defeat them, it will be due to Your Majesty's unrivalled store of merit (somphân)".[14]

Considering that the phongsâwadân were written as part of a legitimizing process, it would hardly be surprising that kings such as Râmâ I, founder of the present Chakkrî dynasty, should have taken much personal interest in the views expressed in new phongsâwadân recensions, and one must assume that each phongsâwadân version had the utmost importance for the ruling

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13) For this aspect of the Hindu kingship see Gonda, op.cit.: passim
14) Vickery, op.cit.: 46

dynasty. Once compiled, a phongsâwadân history did not only become the official history of the kingdom, it was also regarded as an element of the râchûpaphôk, "possessions of a king", regalia.[15] The phongsâwadân were kept and jeaslously guarded by the Department of Scribes in the Royal Archives or the Hǫ Luang. It is interesting that right until the beginning of the twentieth century, the Cambodian court, which had been influenced by Siamese court culture since Râmâ I's reign, also adopted the same attitude towards the special place of the phongsâwadân in the kingdom. A manuscript written in the reign of King Sisovath Manivong (1928-32) clearly states that: "The scribes must look after the sacred chronicles of Cambodia's kings, who reigned at various times".[16] In Siam it appears that sponsorship of a compilation of the phongsâwadân was a symbol of status for a king. When the prince of the northern town of Nân was granted the nominal title of Phrachâo Nân, "Tributary King of Nân", by King Chulâlongkǫn in 1903, even he commissioned one of his court scholars, a certain Sèn Luang Râtchasomphân, to compile a phongsâwadân history of Nân, though it was called the Râtchwongpakǫn in the Tai Yuan fashion.[17]

That the phongsâwadân were particularly important as an element of regalia is borne out by an event witnessed by a French missionary at Ayutthayâ. According to Monsieur

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15) Cf. M. Vickery, Cambodia After Angkor, the Chronicular Evidence for the Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries, Unpub. Ph.D., Yale University, 1977: 505

16) David P. Chandler, "The Duties of the Corps of Royal Scribes: An Undated Khmer Manuscript from the Colonial Era", JSS, 63, 2 (Jul. 1975): 345

17) See Prince Damrong, "Introduction to the Râtchawongpakǫn Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Nân" in PP/10: 188

Lacère, a mysterious fire broke out at the royal palace where King Bǫrommakôt (1733-58) was residing in November 1744. The fire spread rapidly to other buildings that housed the royal possessions. In the panic that followed, the king was carried by two attendants to safety. Having regained his composure, the king ordered his officials to try to save the "annales du royaume" and important papers from the fire.[18] The priority given to the phongsâwadân over other valuables, which were not saved from the fire, showed the king's grave concern for his chief source of legitimacy. It would have been an ominous sign for his reign had the phongsâwadân associated with himself been consumed by the fire.

The majority of the still surviving phongsâwadân dealing with the Ayutthayâ period (1351-67) were either compiled or copied following the fall of Ayutthayâ in 1767. Only the 2/k.125 Fragment, LP/1680, and C.S.1136/1774 Fragment can surely be said to be works of the Ayutthayâ period. But a question has to be asked: if the former kings of Ayutthayâ, such as Bǫrommakôt, were so concerned with the good state of the phongsâwadân, then why did the many phongsâwadân compiled during that period all disappear? The old argument is speculative and based on the assumption that, like all the legal documents, the old phongsâwadân were lost because of the Burmese invaders. This is perhaps only partly true.

Getting to know the weaknesses and strengths of one's enemy was an aspect of ancient statecraft and warfare in

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18) Cited in Busakorn Lailert, The Ban Phlu Luang Dynasty, 1688-1767, a Study of the Thai Monarchy during the Closing Years of the Ayutthaya Period, Unpub. Ph.D., London Univ., 1972: 107

South-East Asia. The Burmese king commissioned a group of his court historians to produce a history of Siam prior to the fall of Ayutthayâ. The fact that this history was based on the recollection and testimonies of the Ayutthayan prisoners of war means that the Burmese had failed to secure any phongsâwadân history at all. The results of this Burmese endeavour were the so-called Khamhaikân Chão Krung Kao, "Testimony of the Citizens of Old Ayutthayâ", written originally in Burmese, and the Khamhaikân Khun Luang Hâ Wat, "Testimony of an Ayutthayan Prince-Monk", written originally in Mon. *) Full of hearsay and containing many inaccuracies, the Khamhaikân Chão Krung Kao does nonetheless provide us with clues to many problems. One of these is the fact that the ordinary people of Ayutthayâ seem to have had only a sketchy knowledge of the phongsâwadân. Furthermore, what was told to the Burmese came primarily from the tamnân sources. One has to presume that ordinary people were not allowed access to the Royal Archive, and the phongsâwadân were evidently remote to them.

With the exception of 2/k.125 Fragment, the earliest phongsâwadân date only from the reign of King Nârâi (1656-88) and King Thâi Sa (1709-33), plus possibly one version from the reign of King Borommakôt (1733-58). The earlier versions did not any longer even exist in the eighteenth century. The reason given by the Siamese war captives to the Burmese was that a C16th usurper, Chinnarât (or Khun Worawongsâ) "gave

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*) The Mon version was acquired by King Mongkut (1851-68), who had Prince Wongsâ, his half-brother, translate the text into Siamese. It was left unnoticed in the Royal Archive until K.S.R. Kulâp copied it and published it without proper authorization from the court in the 1880s. The Burmese version was discovered in the Burmese Royal Archive at Mandalay by the British troops in 1886.

order that the old phongsâwadân be put in the fire or disposed of in the river", and as a result "from that time on the dynastic chronicles of the kingdom have always been fragmentary".[19] Khun Wǫrawongsâ had ruled for only 42 days in 1548, but in that short period of time he had reportedly hastened to destroy a chief source of legitimacy for the displaced dynasty. The extant copies of the phongsâwadân all contain information suggesting that they were written at different points by different hands at times when there was a change of dynasty. A number of the phongsâwadân which were not favourable to an emerging royal family must have been destroyed by them. It is hard to reconcile sources external to the phongsâwadân compiled during the early Bangkok period. As will be shown later, the aberrations that occurred in the phongsâwadân revised during Râmâ I's reign, were caused partly by the loss of documents normally used in the process of recompilation, but mainly by the ever-increasing rôle of scholar-monks who held the view that the fallen dynasty was responsible for the sudden end of Ayutthayâ. By departing from the Buddhist principle of righteousness it had lost its legitimacy.

II

The Phongsâwadân As a Referential Work

Apart from being a source of legitimacy for the new dynasty the phongsâwadân served a secondary purpose. The process by which they were compiled made them an important source of reference for court officials. They were regarded more

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19) Fine Art Dept., Khamhaikân Chão Krung Kao, 2 edition, cremation volume for Khunying Sèni Narongrit, Bangkok, 1925: 69

or less as a treatise on government, or what the Siamese called Phra Tamrâ, "textbooks for the royal family".[20] During the Ayutthayâ period, the compilation work was done systematically using various sources. The preamble of the LP/1680 gives us an idea how a phongsâwadân history was compiled.

> MAY IT BE OF GOOD OMEN.
> In the Year of the Monkey, C.S. 1042, Wednesday, twelfth of the fifth waxing moon, His Majesty graciously enjoined that all the records formerly written by the Chief Astrologer (Phra Hôrâ), documents that could be found in the Royal Archive, and information gleaned from the phongsâwadân history, be rearranged and incorporated into a single volume; and that this work be presented and written down in chronological order up to the present time.[21]

From the above quoted statement we may conclude that (1) contrary to Prince Damrong's conviction that LP/1680 was the first Siamese chronicle, it was actually an abridged version prepared from a detailed phongsâwadân history as well as government papers; (2) it appears that once a new phongsâwadân history was compiled, it covered events up to the reign of the current patron king; and (3) having all kinds of government papers at their disposal, the court historiographers were capable of producing a kind of history which was fairly accurate. It is reasonable to suppose that, where circumstances allowed, the phongsâwadân were all compiled in this way.

The remarkable accuracy of LP/1680 as a historical source of the Ayutthayâ period is almost beyond doubt and

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20) Nidhi Aeusrivongse, Prawattisât Rattanakôsin Nai Phrarât chaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ, "Bangkok History in Ayudhya Chronicles", 1981: 66
21) PP/1: 130; Cf. Frankfurter's translation of the same

well proved by external sources.[22] What made it so reliable is the fact that unlike the tamnân, LP/1680 was archived-based. According to Prince Damrong, important documents such as royal decrees, military notebooks, legal documents, and astrologers' diaries were all deposited in the Royal Archives or Hǫ Sâtsatrâkhom, commonly known as the Hǫ Luang. The Archives was looked after by two junior officials, Nâi Sané and Nâi Sučhindâ Humphrè, who were responsible to the Department of Royal Pages Corps.[23]

Taking LP/1680 as representative of the phongsâwadân of the Ayutthayâ period, one can say that the court historians placed a great deal more emphasis on reporting fact than commentary. A reader needs no reminder that all the phongsâwadân were written in the Buddhist spirit, and the compilers did their best to avoid making any denigrating remark about the reigning king or his family. However, the court historians were allowed certain room to criticize the fallen dynasty. Anyone can see that in the portion dealing with the reigns of Mahâ Chakkraphat (1548-68), and Mahin (1568-69), the compilers were prepared to pass adverse judgements on Phra Mahâ Thammarâchâ, the vassal king of Phitsanulôk, who was to become the new king of Ayutthayâ and restorer of the Sukhôthai dynasty. When Prâsâtthǫng got rid of the last king of the Sukhôthai dynasty in 1629, a new phongsâwadân history

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preamble in "Events in Ayuddhya from Chulasakaraj 686-966", JSS, 6, 3 (Feb. 1909): 3

22) Vickery, Cambodia..: 324 et passim

23) Damrong, Prince, "Tamnân Nangsŭ Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân" (History of the Dynastic Chronicles) in Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Chabap Phrarâtcha Hatthalékhâ, "Royal Autograph Recension of the Chronicle of Ayutthayâ" (RA): 48

had to be written which presented the case of the new dynasty. Not only is it pointed out that as a descendant of the old Sukhôthai dynasty, Mahâ Thammarâchâ was an outsider placed on the throne of Ayutthayâ by the hated Burmese, but he is also implicitly depicted by the phongsâwadân writers as a traitor who had brought about the fall of Ayutthayâ in 1569.

The preoccupation of the court historians with facts and what actually happened was supplemented by a fair amount of commentary. In the phongsâwadân compiled during the early Bangkok period there appears to have been a shift of emphasis in favour of commentary and moral criticism. It is evident that historians at the court of Râmâ I (1782-1809) were much more exposed to Chinese literary tradition than during the Ayutthayâ period. This does not mean that formerly Chinese historiography had not influenced the Siamese élite, especially the belief that one must seek good examples from the past, and history, in Siam as well as in China, was written for the ruling élite and more specifically for the administrators. In the detailed phongsâwadân the compilers paid much attention to matters such as royal ceremonies, conferring of ranks and titles, appointments of vassal rulers, Siam's relations with her neighbours and tributary states, and among other things, the preceding kings' aptitude for statecraft. These were of course subjects often referred to in the traditional system of government of Siam. One of the most important aspects of the phongsâwadân as a source of reference was that they provided the basis for Siam's claims of suzerainty over her dependencies. Some of these claims, however spurrious they were, served as a psychological boost. In the tradi-

tional framework of international relations Siam, in the eyes of the chroniclers, was on a par with Burma, whereas Cambodia and the Lao principalities were treated with little respect as wayward buffer-states. As late as Mongkut's reign (1851-68), the phongsâwadân still retained much authority in the reckoning of the Siamese for occasional reference, and it was Mongkut himself who argued, on the basis of the phongsâwadân, that the Khmer had long been subject to the Siamese.[24)]

III

The Possible Influence of the Chinese Historiographical Tradition in Siam

It has been mentioned that the phongsâwadân were written in the Buddhist spirit. But it can be said that the method of compilation, the principle of truthful recording, and the application of the principle of praise and blame were also characteristic of Chinese historiography.[25)] Even the need for a new phongsâwadân history following the fall of a dynasty was reminiscent of the Chinese tradition. Apart from presenting the case of the newly established dynasty, the Siamese historians may have been following the example of the Chinese literati, since the Yuan (Mongol) dynasty, who held the view that the history of the preceding dynasty should

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24) Milton Osborne and David K. Wyatt, "The Abridged Cambodian Chronicle: A Thai Version of Cambodian History", FA, 22, No. 193 (1968): 191

25) Lien-sheng Yang, "The Organization of Chinese Official Historiography: Principles and Methods of the Standard Histories from the T'ang through the Ming Dynasty" in W.G. Beasley, (ed.), Historians of China and Japan, London: Oxford University Press, 1961: 52

be compiled by its successors, "because judgement and evaluation can become impartial only with later generations".[25]* As in the Chinese Histories, the principle of praise and blame was applied quite openly in the Siamese phongsâwadân, but to get some sense out of certain obscure words one has to read between the lines and be perceptive.

A seventeenth-century contemporary account reveals that King Nârâi (1656-88) was intensely interested in Chinese and Japanese Histories, both being written in the same Confucian mould.[26] And there is no doubt that the Siamese élite looked to China for inspiration, and during the early Bangkok period, enjoyed reading Chinese historical novels, and a number of Chinese quasi-histories were translated into Siamese at this time. The literary style of these Chinese quasi-histories added a new dimension to the language used by the historians who revised the phongsâwadân of Ayutthayâ in Râmâ I's reign. Did the Chinese contribute anything intellectually to the Siamese during the Ayutthayâ period? One has to consider this carefully notwithstanding the assumption that not only was the contact between the two peoples commercial in nature, but the Chinese who came to trade at Ayutthayâ were a bunch of illiterate people.

Indeed, little is known from the indigenous sources of the Chinese community at Ayutthayâ. Even more amazing is the omission of the Sino-Siamese relations by the pre-1850s chro-

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25)*ibid.: 47

26) Nicolas Gervaise, The Natural and Political History of the Kingdom of Siam, A.D. 1688, translated by Herbert Stanley O'Neill, Bangkok, 1928: 117

niclers of the phongsâwadân. The Ayutthayan kings paid nominal tribute to the Emperor of China to facilitate a profitable trade between the two countries. But in the Indian-derived political philosophy, the Siamese king had to style himself an ekkarât, "independent king", or a cakravartin, "universal monarch", and thus he could not have a suzerain. The phongsâwadân compilers chose to conform to the Indian model and presented the Siamese king instead as the sole râchâthirât, "king of kings".[27)]

That the Chinese were always specially treated by the Siamese court is the consensus view of all foreign visitors to Ayutthayâ. Wang Ta-yuan (C14th), Ma Huan (early C15th), and the Portuguese Tomé Pires (early C16th) all wrote of the privileges enjoyed by the Chinese in Siam.[28)] Jeremias van Vliet, representative of the Dutch East India Company at Ayutthayâ for eight years during the 1630s, wrote that this was because "the kings of China and Siam have been friends and allies from olden times".[29)] Simon de la Loubère, Louis XIV's envoy plenipotentiary, who spent three months at Ayutthayâ in 1687, observed that by inclination the Siamese liked to imitate the Chinese in many things.[30)]

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27) In connection with this belief, one can talk of the Indian conception of mandala, "sphere of influence", whereby even a petty king would visualize a situation in which he pretended to be its centre, and rendered tributary those whose smaller kingdoms lay on the borders of his own territory. See Gonda, "Ancient Indian Kingship.." /Pt. 47, Numen, 4, 2 (Apr. 1957): 148

28) Ma Huan, Ying-yai sheng-lan, op.cit.: 104; Armando Cortesao, (ed.&tr.), The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires, Hakluyt Society, 1944: 104

29) Jeremias van Vliet, "Description of the Kingdom of Siam", tr. L.F. van Ravenswaay, JSS, 7, 1 (Jul. 1910): 49-50

30) Simon de la Loubère, The Kingdom of Siam,: 8

Despite the paucity of Siamese records concerning the history of Sino-Siamese relations and the position of Chinese traders overseas, modern research has been done utilizing Chinese historical records, which not only reveals the true nature of Sino-Siamese tributary relations but also confirms the understanding of contemporary observers. One of the most intriguing facts is the number of tribute-bearing missions sent by the kings of Ayutthayâ to the Celestial Court between 1371 and 1433. During this period of 62 years, Siam sent 58 missions, averaging almost one mission per year -notwithstanding the one mission every three years prescribed by the Chinese court.[31] This represented the very peak of cordial Sino-Siamese relations. According to one estimate, Ayutthayâ became one of China's most important trading partners throughout the Ming period (1368-1644).[32] Underlying this were some political implications. Recognition by the Chinese emperor, and the seal of investiture conferred by the Celestial Court on the Siamese king, were regarded as another element in the process of local legitimization, but more importantly as permission to trade at Canton. And at the turn of the fourteenth century A.D., two court factions at Ayutthayâ were vying with each other for the favour of the Chinese emperor. The rivalry between the House of Suphanburî and the House of Lopburî heightened between the 1370s and 1409. Both factions found themselves at liberty to despatch diplomatic missions to China. At times, they requested the Chinese emperor to

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31) Suebsang Promboon, Sino-Siamese Tributary Relations, 1282-1853, Unpub. Ph.D., Univ. of Wisconsin, 1971: Tables III & IV

32) T. Grimm, op.cit.: 12-3

intervene.[33] In 1409, it seems, China's implicit support for Châo Nakhǫn In had consequences that helped the House of Suphanburî gain the upperhand.[34]

The cultural aspect of Sino-Siamese relations during the early Ayutthayâ period, and especially prior to the advent of the Europeans in South-East Asia, must have been pronounced. The Siamese ruling class had acquired a taste for luxury goods from China, especially silk and embroidered fabrics. Furthermore, Chinese art and architecture were evidently admired, and strong Chinese influence in Siamese art of the early Ayutthayâ period is equally well exhibited in the mural paintings on the walls of the Buddhist monasteries, where some of them are accompanied by Chinese ideographs, so cryptic that no one now really understands them.[35]

In the fields of literature and historiography also, the Chinese may have had some influence upon the ruling class of Ayutthayâ, probably from the latter half of the fourteenth century. From the Confucian political viewpoint, China was the centre of the world and the hub of civilization. Sitting on top of the hierarchy of kings, the Chinese emperor needed to show his benevolence towards "barbarians" and persuade them to appreciate the Chinese way of life and customs. It is noteworthy that in anticipation of the Siamese response, Emperor Hung-wu (1368-98) chose to present the Siamese king, Bǫrommarâchâ I (1370-88), with many gifts including a copy of the imperial almanac.[36] It was early on during his reign

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33) For details see ibid.: 3-5; Suebsang, op.cit.: 111
34) Suebsang, op.cit.: 75
35) Chûsiri Châmǫnmân and Wibûn Lîsuwan, op.cit.: 21 and Picture No. 13
36) Suebsang, op.cit.: 152

that an arrangement was made for the National History Office to be attached to the Hanlin Academy, thereby indicating further government sponsorship for official historiographers.[37] In 1404 Emperor Yung-lo rewarded the Ayutthayan envoys by giving them a hundred copies of the "Biographies of Virtuous Ladies" to bring back to Siam.[38]

Of the presence of Chinese scholars at the Ayutthayan court, van Vliet, in his Description of the Kingdom of Siam, informs us that the emperor of China sent to the Siamese king four learned men as permanent representatives at his court.[39] Although van Vliet does not say exactly when these Chinese scholars were attached to the Siamese court, he states in his description of Siam that it has been so since the commencement of the relationship between the two countries.[40] These scholars were allowed to appear in audience before the king when they wanted to, just like other noblemen. "Thus they became", says van Vliet, "so well acquainted with the language, the customs of the country and the highest eloquence that the Chinese as well as the Siamese letters could be translated thoroughly according to the original text".[41] The employment of Chinese scholars at the court of the Siamese kings probably continued throughout the Ayutthayâ period so as to facilitate contact with China, and this practice appears to have continued even in the Bangkok period until King Chulâlongkon's reign (1868-1910), even though China was no longer

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37) Wolfgang Franke, "The Veritable Records of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)" in Beasley, op.cit.: 62-4
38) T. Grimm, op.cit.: 7
39) Van Vliet, op.cit.: 50
40) ibid.
41) ibid.

the dominant power in the region.[42)]

Besides the Chinese scholars, there were some other local Chinese who were prepared to adopt Siamese customs and work their way up the civil hierarchy. As a peaceful and industrious people, the Chinese were employed to manage the king's junk trade with China. Many were awarded Siamese ranks and titles, and some rose to become the Phra Khlang or Chief treasurer of the kingdom, owing partly to their wealth and experience.[43)]

It would be hard to believe that Chinese customs and practices were not transmitted to the Siamese by these Chinese noblemen who had every reason to believe in the superiority of Chinese culture.[44)] We do not really know the extent to which the various Chinese Dynastic Histories inspired the Siamese court historians, but there are points of similarity between the two traditions. First, the writing and compilation of the Chinese Official Histories and the phongsâwadân was commissioned and sponsored by the emperor of China and the king of Siam, respectively. In both cases, the writing of dynastic histories was an activity which lay within the purview of the court literati. Second, in theory at least, phongsâwadân compilers, especially during the early Bangkok period, aimed at re-examining the causes that had actually

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42) An example is Sutčhai Tanthâkât (?-1941), a Chinese scholar in the fifth reign, who was commissioned by King Chulâlongkọn to translate some Chinese Histories into Siamese (PP/5). He was given the rank and title of Phra Chenčhîn-aksọn. Sân Somdet, 21,: 111, 151

43) Alexander Hamilton, A New Account of the East Indies, II, 1930: 97; Cf. G.W. Skinner, Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History, Cornell University Press, 1957: [14]

44) To quote J. Crawfurd (1822), "The Chinese are the only foreign people with whom they [the Siamese] had much intercourse, and whose superiority to themselves they are at all disposed to admit". Journal of an Embassy to the Court of Siam and Cochin China,: 332

contributed to the downfall of a king and the decline of his dynasty, no matter whether they were political, ehtical or moral issues. From the Chinese point of view, one can learn lessons from the past, and in the words of Emperor T'ai-tsu (Hung-wu, 1368-1402), "history marks success and failure and offers lessons of encouragement or warning, so that it should not be abandoned".[45] This was also the philosophy behind the compilation of the post-Ayutthayan phongsâwadân in the first reign of the Chakkrî dynasty. Krom Phrarâtchawang Bǫwǫn Mahâ Surasinghanât, Prince of the Front Palace (1782-1806), could not help condemning the Bân Phlû Luang kings for their failure to learn lessons from the past conflicts with Burma.[46] Third, as in Imperial China where Official Histories were chiefly used for occasional references rather than as common reading materials,[47] the phongsâwadân were not for pleasure reading because they were written in a sort of solemn stylized prose. Even when some of them were written in verse the poet would confine himself quite strictly to the use of either the râi or khlông metre, or a combination of both.[48] These two poetical metres have the effect of making them sound very imposing.

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45) Lien-sheng Yang, op.cit.: 47

46) Mahâ Surasinghanât, Nirât Rû'ang Tî Mû'ang Phamâ, "A Poetical Travellogue on the Occasion of My Campaign against Burma in 1793", Bangkok: Sôphon Phiphatthanâkǫn, 1923: 21 et seq.

47) Lien-sheng Yang, op.cit.: 49

48) A Siamese poet can choose one of five literary metres to suit the nature of his work. They are khlông, chan, kâp, klǫn, and râi. With rare exceptions, the poet might display his skill by including all the suitable metres, barring klǫn, in his work. Râi was used almost exclusively in religious poems, because it was thought to create a ritualistic atmosphere, although it has a simple rhyming scheme. The famous historical poems, Yuan Phâi, "Defeat of the Tai Yuan", and Taleng Phâi, "Defeat of the Burmese", written in C15th and C19th respectively, were composed in

IV

The Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ:

The Ayutthayâ Recensions

Until recently, there was almost no critical study on the genesis of and the philosophy behind the writing of the phongsâwadân. The study of Siamese history had been frustratingly hampered by the lack of a reliable phongsâwadân history among those revised during the early Bangkok period, until the discovery of the LP/1680 in 1907. Writing in 1913, Prince Damrong stated that as it is an abridged chronicle, LP/1680 could be the first phongsâwadân ever written by the Siamese, and that the post-Ayutthayan phongsâwadân were based structurally on it, although the chronology of events was revised by Râmâ I's historians.[49] During the 1970s, there was a revival of interest in the indigenous sources in general and in the phongsâwadân in particular. This new interest centred on Michael Vickery's discovery, in 1971, of an unknown and incomplete phongsâwadân history, the so-called 2/k.125 Fragment, and the publication of Jeremias van Vliet's Short History by the Siam Society in 1975. The editing by Michael Vickery of the 2/k.125 Fragment in 1977,[50] and that by D.K. Wyatt of the Short History in 1975[51] was admirably done, and shed new light on the history of Siam. Previously, in 1958, a further version of the post-Ayutthayan phongsâwadân had been discovered by Khačhon Sukhaphânit in the British Museum

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the lilit form, i.e. a combination of râi and khlông. For further details about Siamese verse see P. Schweisguth, Étude sur la littérature siamoise: 18-25

49) Damrong, "Tamnân Nangsư..": 30-2

50) Same as fn. 6

51) The Short History of the Kings of Siam, tr. Leonard Andaya, 1975

Library, and published for the first time in 1964.[52)]

The publications of the three cited works in the past twenty years have rendered the many revered studies of Prince Damrong out of date, notably where the evolution of the phongsâwadân historiography is concerned. Although several historians have begun to treat of the subject with a great deal more care than a few decades ago, it must be pointed out that their studies are limited in scope and perhaps preponderantly historical rather than historiographical in approach; Michael Vickery is no doubt the leading authority in the field, but his thesis and series of penetrating review articles concentrate almost solely on aspects of Cambodian-Siamese relations in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries,[53)] and Busakorn Lailert's interest in the phongsâwadân in presenting the political history of the Bân Phlû Luang dynasty (1656-1767) is no more central.[54)] The most recent work is Nidhi Aeusrivongse's Bangkok History in Ayudhya Chronicles, which attempts to give an alternative interpretation with regard to the com-

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52) Fine Art Department, Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sayâm, op.cit.

53) Michael Vickery's critical approach to the indigenous sources persuades us to question many assumptions long-held by historians of the previous generation. Besides Cambodia After Angkor (see fn. 15), his important works include:
"A Guide to Some Recent Sukhothai Historiography", JSS, 66, 2 (Jul. 1978): 182-246
"The Lion Prince and Related Remarks on Northern History", JSS, 64, 1 (Jan. 1976): 326-77
"The 2/k.125 Fragment, a Lost Chronicle of Ayutthaya", JSS, 65, 1 (Jan. 1977): 1-74
"Review of The Short History of the Kings of Siam by Jeremias van Vliet", JSS, 64, 2 (Jul. 1976): 207-36
"The Khmer Inscriptions of Tenasserim: A Reinterpretation", JSS, 61, 1 (Jan. 1973): 51-70
"The Composition and Transmission of the Ayudhya and Cambodian Chronicles" in Anthony Reid and David G. Marr, (eds), Perception of the Past in Southeast Asia, Singapore, 1979: 130-54

54) Same as fn. 18

pilation of the post-Ayutthayan phongsâwadân.[55] Impressive, as a piece of literary criticism, it does not tackle the fundamentals of historiography, however; i.e. no attempt is made to place the various phongsâwadân in historical perspective, although it appears that their compilers swung from one tradition to another.

The complacency of many historians in this area results from the belief that everything is well accounted for with regard to the phongsâwadân. In actual fact, there is yet to be any sort of comprehensive study of the evolution of the phongsâwadân. A sketchy introduction to the subject can be found in D.K. Wyatt's article entitled "Chronicle Traditions in Thai Historiography".[56] Busakorn Lailert's "Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ" (The Dynastic Chronicles of Ayutthayâ)[57] gives an overview of the chronicles compiled under the Chakkrî dynasty with some useful comments, but it is rather superficially written, and it can be said to be inspired by an earlier article by Trî Amâttayakun, a well-known Thai historian.[58] Lastly, mention must be made of Nâttawiphâ Chalitânon's Prawattisât Niphon Thai, "A History of Thai Historiography",[58]* which was published in 1981, but

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55) Nidhi Aeusrivongse, Prawattisât Rattanakôsin Nai Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ, "Bangkok History in Ayudhya /sic/Chronicles", Bangkok: Bannakit, 1981

56) in C.D. Cowan and O.W. Wolters, (eds), Southeast Asian History and Historiography, Cornell University Press, 1976: 107-22

57) SP, 12, 2 (Jul. 1968): 89-93

58) Namely, "Phû Tèng Nangsü Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Chabap Phim Sǫn Lem" (The Real Compiler(s) of the Two-Volumed Edition of the Dynastic Chronicle of Ayutthayâ), SP, 5, 6 (Mar. 1962): 43-50; and SP, 6, 1 (May 1962): 25-34

58)*Bangkok; Thammasât University Press, 1981

hardly represents any great stride towards a better understanding of the evolution of the phongsâwadân as a whole.

There were many chronicular traditions in phongsâwadân historiography. Intrinsic to the extant copies of the phongsâwadân, these traditions need to be identified so that one can trace how they were transmitted from an earlier to a later recension. Of the thirteen recensions of the Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ, two: the Saṅgītiyavaṃsa (1789) and the Culayuddhakaravaṃsa (c.1802-1811) were written in Pali by the great first-reign historian Somdet Phra Wannarat, abbot of Wat Phra Chétuphon (Wat Phô), Bangkok; one was written in Dutch by van Vliet, in 1640, from an old version of the Chronicle of Ayutthayâ; and the rest, were written in Siamese. One of the major problems facing historians is the true date when these phongsâwadân histories were compiled or revised, inasmuch as many are fragmentary and not dated. It is quite crucial that historians of Thai history resolve this state of confusion.

My objective will be to try to establish the chronology of these phongsâwadân on the basis of critical interpretation, and then describe the interplay of various traditions in the compilation of post-Ayutthayan phongsâwadân, for example, why in 1795 two revisions were made, and why the complete version was only finally achieved in 1808. In determining the age of the phongsâwadân the following considerations are taken into account:-

(1) Pattern of Chronology.

As will be explained, there appear to have been four different chronological frameworks confronting the phongsâ-

wadân compilers during the early Bangkok period. These are:-

1.1 The LP/1680 group

1.2 The C.S.1145 Fragment group

1.3 The vV-Saṅgīti/1789 group, and

1.4 The Culayud/c.1811 group

These chronological patterns are arrived at by way of comparison of all the phongsâwadân recensions to be discussed. And reference will be made occasionally to Appendix III (A-C) for analytical purposes.

(2) Language and Narrative Style.

The fact is, one can notice the marked difference between the 2/k.125 Fragment (mid- or late C15th) and the rest, in terms of language used by the compilers. But it is not easy to tell the difference between the language and orthography of the late Ayutthayâ and early Bangkok periods. From a literary point of view, however, the narrative style of the phongsâwadân became more polished in the early Bangkok than the late Ayutthayâ period, and the expressions used show clearly traces of the influence of Chinese quasi-histories. In fact many revisions of the phongsâwadân are identifiable from the language used.

(3) Anachronisms.

Unlike the Ayutthayan phongsâwadân, which are generally trustworthy, the post-Ayutthayan ones are full of anachronisms, and can hardly be vouched for by external evidence. These anachronisms take the form of accretions, borrowed themes, and misplaced myths as well as made-up stories.

(4) Structure of Ranks and Titles.

The inflation of ranks and conflation of titles is in

itself one of the most interesting subjects of Thai history.[59] In the thirteenth century "Khun" meant "Lord" or "Ruler" of a Tai principality. With the expansion of Ayutthayâ in the first half of the fifteenth century, many old Tai principalities in Upper Siam came under Ayutthayâ's domination. The vassal rulers were then designated by the Mon-derived title of "Phayâ" or "Phrayâ" (Graphic = "Bana" and "Brana"), whereas the term "Khun" devalued and was incorporated into the Siamese official hierarchy. Obviously, the term "Khun" still retained much prestige prior to King Borommatrailôk (1448-88)'s supposed administrative reform, being the ministerial rank.[60] But a number of new ranks were subsequently added to the Ayutthayan hierarchy so that they further devalued the old Tai ranks, "Khun", "Phan", and "Nâi". In the seventeenth century, "Khun" became a fourth-grade rank, and the highest officials of the kingdom had been given the rank of "Phayâ" since the reign of King Songtham (1610-28).[61] The compilers of the post-Ayutthayan phongsâwadân probably did not understand the complexity of this, and their application of ranks could be erratic, especially as parts of the phongsâwadân had to be written anew.

The originals of the following phongsâwadân date from the Ayutthayâ period: (1) 2/k.125 Fragment, (2) vV/1640, (3) LP/1680, and (4) C.S.1136 Fragment.

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59) See M. Vickery, "Review of Thai Titles and Ranks by Robert B. Jones", JSS, 63, 1 (Jan. 1974): 158-73

60) For example, see KTS: "Khun Phra Khlang" (Chief Treasurer), Law of Thievery dated B.E. 1903 (A.D. 1359): 431; "Khun Monthianrabân" (Minister of the Royal Household), Law of Thievery dated B.E. 1910 (A.D. 1366): 466; "Khun Châsèn-sî Ongkharak, Samuhanâyok" (Chief Minister in Charge of Civilian Affairs), dated from Borommatrailôk's reign: 505

61) KTS: Phra Aiyakân Laksana Moradok, "Law Concerning Bequest", dated B.E. 2155 (A.D. 1611): 346, 347

(1) 2/k.125 Fragment

The 2/k.125 Fragment is the oldest Siamese chronicle so far discovered. Consisting of 37 folded leaves bound into a single fascicle of samut-thai-dam, "folding black book", it was copied from an older manuscript. The extant manuscript seems to date from the Ayutthayâ period.[62] It is a fragment of a detailed phongsâwadân history. Two dates are found in the text: "Cula Era 845, Pig Year, fifth of the decade" and "Cula Era 846, Rat Year", but both are wrong. Michael Vickery, on the basis of textual analysis, has emended them to C.S. 805, Pig Year, and C.S. 806, Rat Year, which correspond to A.D. 1443 and A.D. 1444.[63] These two dates fall within the reign of Bọrommarâchâ II (1424-48), who, according to LP/1680, invaded Angkor, the Khmer capital, in 1431, and installed Phra Nakhọn In, his son, as vassal king of Cambodia. The 2/k.125 Fragment describes events in Cambodia in great detail, especially the Khmer uprising led by Châo Yât, whose campaigns finally dislodged the Siamese from Cambodia. It contains information which is missing from the other Cambodian and Siamese chronicles such as the fact that Nakhọn In was not killed but died of illness, and that he was succeeded by Phrayâ Phrèk, his younger brother. The confusing Cambodian chronicles give the name of Intharâchâ for Nakhọn In and say that Phrayâ Phrèk was his second name.[64]

Of all the phongsâwadân, the 2/k.125 Fragment is by far the most difficult to read and understand because it contains

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62) Vickery, "2/k.125 Fragment": 50
63) ibid.
64) ibid.: 56

many archaic terms. Whereas the English translation by M. Vickery is admirably correct, there are certain points that can be otherwise understood.[65)]

What should strike us all in the 2/k.125 Fragment is its structure of ranks. To quote Michael Vickery, each rank "seems to have a much higher status than in the nineteenth century, and also higher than in the 1805 Laws, some parts of which are believed to date from much earlier. Thus khun and nāy appear to be high-ranking officers; the only people entitled bañā/brañā (modern bra:yā) are rulers of the Sukhô-thai-area mo'aṅ, recently independent; and the only two cau bañā besides Yat, who appears to have assumed that title himself, are sons of the Ayutthayan king. Even officers who appear to be ministers of the central government are only entitled khun".[66)] He concludes that "the rank structure of 2/k.125 belongs right where its ostensible date falls, just before Trailokanath's reign".[67)] Possibly it could have

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65) For example, on page xvi a passage is translated like this: "So H.M. the King of Braḥ Nagar Hluoṅ had Nāy Laṅ Bat arrange a ruse, had him sneak off to report to Samtec Braḥ Paramarājādhirāj Cau that Khun Nagar..." ibid.: 37
The problematical expression is tèng khon ( ) I take the word "" for khon, "man", and not kon, "ruse" as does Michael Vickery. The word tèng in modern usage is coupled with the tang, but its original meaning, "appoint, choose, arrange for a man to do something", remains the same. I would translate this same passage as follows:
"So H.M. the King of Nakhǫn Luang (Angkor) ordered Nâi Long Phat to arrange for a man to sneak off to report to Somdet Phra Bǫrommarâchâthirât Čhâo that Khun Nakhǫnchai.."
The fact that Nâo Long Phat did not go to Ayutthayâ himself is quite clear in the following passage which read: "When the servant (khon chai) had reported the matter,...".

66) ibid.: 54; Nāy=Nâi, bañā/brañā=Phayâ/Phrayâ, Cau bañā=Čhâophrayâ in modern usage.

67) ibid.

been compiled during Trailôk's reign because Bǫrommarâchâ II died in 1448, just four years after the events the 2/k.125 Fragment purports to cover.

The 2/k.125 Fragment has a distinctive narrative style. It is lucid and plain but it consists of a train of conversations, which are obviously imaginative rather than real. The following is a passage from the 2/k.125 Fragment:-

> So Khun Nakhǫnchai sent Châo Yât on from Chaturamuk (Phnom Penh) by boat without having him fettered. When they reached a district called Sèng Plao.... Later on at night when all the guards who came with him fell asleep, Châo Yât got into the water and swam away to Khun Phlapphlâchai who asked him who he was. Châo Yât then answered, "My name is Yât, son of Phra Râm". Khun Phlapphâchai asked further, "(If) you are Phra Râm's son, who then is your mother?" Châo Yât answered, "My mother's name is Nâng Âmphuket". Khun Phlapphlâchai then said, "You are my friend's son, without doubt". He continued, "Khun Nakhǫnchai wants to send you, Châo Yât, to Ayutthayâ. I shall protect you. Let no fear bother you." Châo Yât said, "From what you have just said, if I ever doubt your sincerity, do kill me please in your own house." So Khun Phlapphlâchai prepared food for Châo Yât. After Châo Yât had eaten, he sent Châo Yât to Mahârnankhèk of the Phak tribe of Khun Phalâchai in Trún.
>
> At daybreak all the guards knew that Châo Yât had already escaped. All the soldiers rushed out to the quarter of Khun Phlapphlâchai. Khun Phlapphlâchai said, "I have never met Châo Yât. If anyone in my quarter knows him, he will accompany you, and we will help you look for him."[68)]

Despite some imaginative conversations, the compiler's rendition of events is remarkably accurate in the setting of fifteenth-century Khmer-Siamese relations. The imaginative

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68) Cf. M. Vickery's translation, ibid.: 15

side of this chronicle together with its considerable detail and the compiler's intimate knowledge of his subject means that it must have been written just after the actual events. Apart from the two dates given, there is no other time element anywhere. There is no doubt that it was written under royal patronage, but is not strictly based on archival extracts.[69] Its significance amounts to the key to C15th Cambodian-Siamese relations. An intriguing statement of the 2/k.125 Fragment reveals that Châo Yât, hero of later Khmer chronicles, was the son of "Phra Râm Châo" whom the Ayutthayan king had banished to rule in Chaturamuk.[70] According to LP/1680, "Somdet Phrayâ Râm Châo", who had succeeded to the throne of Ayutthayâ since 1395, quarrelled with his Chief Minister in 1409. The Chief Minister fled to Phra Intharâchâ, Prince of Suphanburî, and together they marched against the capital. Phrayâ Râm Châo was dethroned, and was sent by the new king, Intharâchâ, to rule at a place called Pathâkhûčhâm.[71] Michael Vickery argues, I think, convincingly, that the mysterious Pathâkhûčhâm is not only a corrupt orthographic form, but it can also be linked philologically to Chaturamuk (modern Phnom Penh).[72] If "Phra Râm Châo" of 2/k.125 Fragment and "Phrayâ Râm Châo" of LP/1680 were the same person, we would have to conclude that Ayutthayâ had already exerted some influence over parts, if not all, of Cambodia, prior to

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69) ibid.: 53
70) ibid.: 10-1
71) LP/1680 in PP/1, Khurusaphâ edition, vol. 1,: 133
72) Vickery, op.cit.: 55-60

Bǫrommarâchâ II's attack on Angkor itself in 1431. A further twist to the story is that, Ĉhâo Yât, the epitome of Khmer resistance against Ayutthayan rule, was not Khmer at all, but a scion of the fallen House of Lopburî.

(2) The vV/1640

A Dutchman named Jeremias van Vliet came to Siam in 1633 as representative of the Dutch East India Company, which operated from Batavia. He was to remain at Ayutthayâ until 1641. During that long sojourn van Vliet wrote three important accounts of Siam: (1) Description of the Kingdom of Siam in 1636,[73] (2) The Short History of the Kings of Siam in 1640,[74] and (3) Historical Account of Siam in the Seventeenth Century also in 1640.[75] All three accounts are of considerable length and provide historians with first-hand knowledge of the political changes that occurred in Siam in the first half of the seventeenth century. They are an invaluable source of Thai history because none of the Siamese chronicles for this period are reliable and trustworthy. Having a Siamese wife and knowing the Siamese language and customs quite well, van Vliet had the obvious advantages other foreign visitors found wanting. He showed remarkable

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73) Van Vliet, "Description", op.cit.

74) Same as fn. 51

75) W.H. Mundie, (tr.), "Van Vliet's Historical Account of Siam in the Seventeenth Century", JSS, 30 (1938): 95-154
The English translation by Mundie is based on the French text which was translated from the Dutch original in 1663 by a certain M. Wicquefort. As it turns out, the French translation is full of mistakes, one of which is the reign period of Songtham, who the Dutch original says ruled for 19 years, but Wicquefort wrote down as 9 years. See Khačhǫn Sukhaphânit, "Sǫp Pî Ratchakân Somdet Phra Ekâthotsarot" (A Revision of Ekâthotsarot's Reign Period) in Khǫmûn Prawattisât Samai Ayutthayâ, "Historical Sources: Ayutthayâ Period", Social Science Association of Thailand, 1980: 78-151

skill in acquiring information about the Siamese past, which would otherwise be ignored by a Westerner.

Of the three works cited, the Short History is the most important document from the historiographical point of view as it preserves a chronicular tradition known only in a Pali work of the late eighteenth century, the Saṅgītiya-vaṃsa. The Short History was written by van Vliet for the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies. It covers the period from antiquity to the reign of King Prâsâtthong, who came to the throne just three years before van Vliet's arrival. It appears that van Vliet had actually translated an old Siamese chronicle into Dutch.

The pre-Ayutthayan period is covered from various sources. Van Vliet refers to "Old Histories" and learned monks as his authority.[76] In the Description, van Vliet speaks of the Siamese and their history as follows:-

> ...: of antiquities of their country, of the beginning of war, of the conclusion of peace, of the loss of countries and towns, victories or defeats in battles, famous heroes or excellent persons in virtue and knowledge, etc., they have few descriptions, thus that their principal descriptions consist in the laws of the country, the fundaments of their religion, the lives, deeds and praise of some dead kings whose fame was not so much based on Royal respect as on service rendered to the gods, temples and priests living in their country, and these descriptions were mostly committed to the care of the priests, by whom also their ceremonies, punishments, exhortions, consolations and instructions are formed. Thus amongst the nobility,

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76) Short History: 53, 54

> the rich or civil population, not many chronicles or historical records are known, with exception of those which are reported verbally or are related in discourses.[77]

Even a casual reader would recognize that van Vliet was talking about the rôle of monks as historians in Siam and their attitude towards "good" historical writing, which was based on a person's religious contribution. In this case, van Vliet was describing the principle of tamnân history, and as can be seen from the section dealing with the pre-Ayutthayâ period, extracts from the "Old Histories" which are so varied and differing were actually taken from the tamnân and corrupt religious texts. However, the history of the Ayutthayan period appears to have been translated from a single text throughout as it corresponds to the Saṅgīti.

The chronology of the Short History (hereafter, vV/1640) differs greatly from that of the 2/k.125 Fragment and LP/1680, which was compiled some 40 years after van Vliet's time. As shown in appendices III (A & B), vV/1640's chronology is correct only from the reign of Narésuan to that of the then reigning king, Prâsâtthǫng. The discrepancy suggests that this religious chronicle is not archive-based, and probably, the saṅgha had its own tradition. I agree with the late Khačhǫn Sukhaphânit's assumption that van Vliet had no access at all to the Royal Archives (Hǫ Nangsŭ Luang),[78] as it was still an offence in the reign of King Chulâlongkǫn, in the late nineteenth century, even for a Siamese, let alone a foreigner, to copy the royal paper without permission.

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77) Van Vliet, "Description": 90
78) Khačhǫn, op.cit.: 149

As it stands, vV/1640 was likely to have been compiled from a dateless oral tradition in the reign of Prâsâtthọng. The vV/1640 agrees throughout with the Saṅgīti/1789 on the length of reign periods. We know from the Saṅgīti/1789 that from the reign of Narissa (Narésuan), to that of Prâsâtthọng, an animal designation is given to each accession year, whereas in the earlier reigns, only two animal years are given for the accession years of Râmâthibọdî I (Tiger Year, B.E. 1892) and Nọphutthângkûn (Bull Year, B.E. 2072). Where the animal year is given the accession date corresponds with LP/1680.[79] The chronology from Râmâthibọdî I to Mahâ Thammarâchâ is distorted with the exception of the accession dates for Râmâthibọdî I and Nọphutthângkûn.[80] This seems to suggest that the compiler of vV/1640 had worked on imperfect materials and been forced to rely mainly on oral transmission with regard to the first seventeen reigns of Ayutthayâ. The compiler made no mistake with events very close to his life-time. Supposing he was (a monk of ?) 55 to 60 years old, he would have witnessed all the changes that took place between the reigns of Râmésuan (Ekâthotsarot) and Prâsâtthọng.

A fair assessment of vV/1640 must be made in terms of the syle of narrative, bearing in mind that van Vliet could not impose his own view on the original text, especially on

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79) For the full chronology of vV/1640 and Saṅgīti/1789, see Appendix III (A & B). When the animal year is said to be correct, it is because it corresponds with LP/1680.

80) ibid.; Not only does the chronology of vV/1640 differ greatly from that of LP/1680, but the names of certain kings in vV/1640 are also different from those given in LP/1680. Thọng Lan (ทองลัน) in LP/1680 is most likely to be a misspelling for vV/1640's earlier form of Thọng Chan (ทองจัน), but this does not exclude the possibiltity that it could be the other way round.

the reigns previous to Songtham (1610-28) when Dutch interests at Ayutthayâ were virtually non-existant. The judgement passed on each reign is characteristic of tamnân history. A king's fortune, glory and failure is summarily discussed with Buddhist ethical principles in mind, namely, one cannot fail if one is "good". Ill-fated kings have to be glossed over. It is as though van Vliet had taken excerpts from the original and translated them into Dutch.

Thâo Ū-Thọng, a wayward son of the Emperor of China, and reputed founder of Ayutthayâ,[81] is depicted as a great king, despite his discredited past, because "This king was wise, eloquent, careful, courageous, active, liberal, solicitous towards his soldiers and people, and devoutly religious".[82] On the other hand, his son, Phra Râmésuan, who was deposed by Bọrommarâchâ I,

> was of little wisdom, was ill-natured, cruel and bloodthirsty, choleric, avaricious, greedy, gluttonous, and lustful. He did not hesitate to dishonour anyone's wives and have them brought to him by force.[83] He was careless in everything concerning the welfare of the kingdom and the peace of the community. No warrior by nature, he did not love his soldiers at all, things spiritual and religious very little, and the poor even less.[84]

This is one of the most hideous charges a monk could level against a king and his legitimacy because a Buddhist king had to observe the Five Precepts and the Ten Kingly Ways

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81) For the tamnân origin of Ū-Thọng see Chapter I, pp.136-9
82) Short History: 60
83) Again the borrowed Mahāvaṃsa theme earlier used to described Ū-Thọng himself. ibid.: 55-6
84) ibid.: 60

and be mindful to the welfare of his subjects. After a period of enforced exiled, Phra Râmésuan re-emerged a different man, and deposed the son of the previous king, who had ousted him in the first place. This time the compiler had to extol a successful king, and it runs like this:-

> He was merciful, full of pity, modest, punished without haste, and forgave easily. He was wise and prudent, brave in the handling of weapons on elephants and horseback, as well as on foot. He gave many alms to the ecclesiastics and to the poor, building and repairing many temples and monasteries. Because of his devotion he often went to sacrifice to the gods, not so much like a king, but more like a monk. He was much loved by the mandarins and the common man.[85]

The treatment of other kings similarly reveals that the compiler of vV/1640 possessed little knowledge of factual history of Ayutthayâ prior to the reign of Râmésuan/ Ekâthotsarot (1605-10). Probably, the idea of factual history was subject to the principle of "praise and blame" as understood by a Buddhist monk, who wanted to highlight the moral issues by applying the Buddhist theory of causes and effects. Thus the same king, Râmésuan, can be described as a disgraced person in one instance and as a just king in another. But we know from the Chinese records that changes at Ayutthayâ and the succession crises until 1409 were precipitated by the rivalry between the House of Lopburî, to which Râmésuan belonged, and the House of Suphanburî, whose founder was Bǫrommarâchâ I. Another example of a good king in the ęyes of the compiler derives from the reign of Bǫromma-

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85) ibid.: 62

trailôk:-

> His majesty lived a fruitful life which his forebears had not experienced. He was very merciful and solicitous towards the welfare of his people and the peace of the land. He was a lover of justice, and if any judge let himself be corrupted with gifts he had him severely punished. He ruled twenty years. He laid down his royal functions and became a religious person to the grief of his subjects. He did not encumber himself anymore with worldly affairs, but remained studious, religious and devout. He died a monk.[86]

The fact is, Bǫrommatrailôk entered the monkhood for eight months in 1464, but he did not die whilst being a monk. No mention is made of Bǫrommatrailôk's war with Chiang Mai, which had occupied most of this king's time. He was one of the famous Buddhist kings of his life-time, being also the composer of the much celebrated Mahâchât Kham Luang (1482), "Sermon on the Great Life of the Buddha".[87] The compiler of the vV/1640 original chose to bring to the fore only his religious virtues. It is remarkable that this approach was to continue with the revised Saṅgīti/1789, one hundred and fifty years later.

As a source of Siamese history vV/1640 is not to be trusted, inasmuch as it was apparently originally compiled from oral traditions and fragmentary records. The first half includes many tamnân myths and foreign themes. Van Vliet himself seems to have confused Râmâthibǫdî I and Râmâthibǫdî II, the first and eleventh kings of Ayutthayâ. The myth about the magical power of Râmâthibǫdî II, who was

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86) ibid.: 64
87) PP/1: 138

able to cast a spell on the agents of Râmmarât, an Indian king, and transfix them so that they could not move forward or backward,[88] reminds one of a well-known theme associated with the legendary figure of Phra Ruang of Sukhôthai, whose magic transfixed and petrified a Khmer spy sent by the king of Angkor to kill him.[89] The magical warfare between the Indian king and Râmâthibọdî II (1491-1529) was not entirely whimsical but rather a hazy recollection of the constant warfare, described by Ludovico di Varthema, who visited Tenasserim in 1505, between the King of Narsinga (old Bijayanagar) and the King of Banghella on the one hand, and the King of Tenasserim on the other.[90] As Tenasserim was Siam's important port, there is little doubt that the King of Tenasserim di Varthema was referring to meant in fact the King of Siam, and as a matter of fact, Narsinga covered a great part of the Coromandel Coasts.

There are some other points that also invite discussion. Van Vliet stated quite categorically in all his works that there was a law in Siam that gave precedence to a king's oldest younger brother over his son in the matter of succession. This law, according to van Vliet, originated in the reign of Bọrommarâchâ I.[91] The Phra Aiyakân Tamnèng Nâ Phonlarû'an, "Law of Civil Hierarchy", enacted in the reign

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88) ibid.: 66

89) See Camille Notton, Légendes sur le Siam et le Cambodge, Bangkok: Imprémerie de l'Assomptions, 1939: 40-5

90) Ulrich Guehler, (tr.&ed.), "The Travels of Ludovico di Varthema and His Visit to Siam, Banghella, and Pegu, A.D. 1505", Selected Articles from the Siam Society Journal, vol. 6, 1959: 252-3

91) Short History: 61

of Bǫrommatrailôk,[92] does indicate that the king's younger brother, who was invested with the rank and title of "Somdet Phra Anuchâthirât", had a higher sakdinâ, "dignity", mark than the king's son. But the Kot Monthianrabân, "Palatine Law", promulgated also in Bǫrommatrailôk's reign, provides no clause at all concerning the succession issue. It is likely that van Vliet misunderstood the terms of the Law of Civil Hierarchy, and had confused it with the Palatine Law. His obsession with this idea compelled him to describe Bǫrommatrailôk as Bǫrommarâchâ II's brother and not son.[93] This assertion is at variance with what we find in LP/1680 and even the Sangîti/1789.[94]

The vV/1640 is the only document of the first half of the seventeenth century besides the Khlông Mangtharâ -a poem composed in 1614 by an anonymous Chiang Mai poet- that gives the name Râmésuan to a king known generally by the name of Ekâthotsarot (1605-10) in the post-Ayutthayan phongsâwadân.[95]

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92) The Law of Civil Hierarchy is dated "1298, dog year". This date is definitely wrong. In case of uncertainty, The animal designation is unlikely to be incorrect. 1298 cannot be the Greater Era (M.S.) as M.S. 1298 is a "dragon year". Nor can it be a Lesser Era (C.S.) date, because C.S. 1298 corresponds to A.D. 1936. The only possibility is, it is the little known Chulâmanî Era (+188=A.D.), and 1298 must be corrected to 1289. Scribal errors abound in old Thai texts, and as a matter of fact, the graphic shapes of 8 and 9 in written Thai are very similar so that they can be confusing. My amendment is supported by the mentioning of a "cock year, eighth of the decade". The omission of the actual year date implies that that particular year has just passed. A "cock year, eighth of the decade" is C.S. 838 corresponding to Chulâmanî Era 1288 (A.D. 1476). My proposal is the Law of Civil Hierarchy were promulgated in A.D. 1477 in the reign of Bǫrommatrailôk (1448-88). KTS: 108

93) Short History: 63

94) See PP/1: 135; Coedès, "Une recension palie..": 19

95) Sommâi Premčhit & Puangkham Tuikhiâo, (eds), Khlông Mangtharâ, Chiang Mai University, 1976: Stanza 22, p. 5

The post-Ayutthayan phongsâwadân were written some 150 years after these two documents, and prove to be mostly inaccurate, so the name Râmésuan may be correct.

Leaving the chronicle part of the Short History aside, one can say that van Vliet's contemporary account of the reigns of Songtham and his successors is of immense historical value. Of the reign of Songtham[96] and the upheaval following his death in 1628, van Vliet could certainly consult the records and diaries of previous Dutch factors at Ayutthayâ and report the events that took place between that time and during his stay in Siam almost from the inside. Of course, as a Dutchman, van Vliet was bound to be biased where Dutch political and commercial interests were involved, for example, in the Description, written earlier in 1636, van Vliet was emotionally prepared to condemn Prâsâtthong's political ruse, but later in the Short History, he seems to have changed his attitude towards this king.

(3) LP/1680

LP/1680 is named after Luang Prasert Aksonraniti (Phè Tâlalak), who discovered it in Phetchaburî province in 1907. It was translated by O. Frankfurter into English in 1909.[97]

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96) Called "Intharâchâ" in vV/1640 and Saṅgīti/1789. He is said in the detailed phongsâwadân to have reigned between 1602 and 1627. (See: Appendix III.B) Intharâchâ/Songtham, according to vV/1640 and Saṅgīti/1789, came to the throne in 1610, which is the date confirmed by European contemporary records. See, especially W.H. Moreland, (ed.), Peter Floris: His Voyage to the East Indies in the Globe, Hakluyt Society, 1934: 55

97) "Events in Ayuddhya from Chulasakaraj 686-966", JSS, 6, 3 (Feb. 1909): 3-19; Translated as early as 1909, it contains some mistakes of which scholars of Thai history must beware. The misconceptions of early Thai history in the early twentieth century were influenced by Prince

According to its preamble, LP/1680 was compiled in the reign of King Nârâi (1656-88) and "written down in chronological order up to the present time".[98] This means that it purport to cover events in Ayutthayâ from its beginning to the first half of Nârâi's reign. The copy acquired by the Wachirayân National Library in 1907 covers the period between C.S. 686 (A.D. 1324/5) and C.S. 966 (A.D. 1604/5). According to European sources and vV/1640, Narésuan died in 1605.[99] We may then presume that the original LP/1680 consists of two fascicles, the first covering the period between 1324/5 and 1604/5 and the second the period between 1605/6 (first year of Râmésuan/Ekâthotsarot's reign) and the 1670s.

In 1913 the second copy of LP/1680 was presented to the Wachirayân National Library. Consisting of two samut-thai

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Damrong's "national" historiography, in which Siam was always to be presented as a unitary state. In fact as recently as the fourth Bangkok reign, peoples outside the Châophrayâ valley, Siam Proper were even described as "foreigners". In translating LP/1680, Frankfurter imposed the C20th Thai view of ancient history on a work written some two hundred years earlier, For instance, the word "Mû'ang Nû'a" in LP/1680 means certainly "Upper Siam", i.e. the old Sukhôthai kingdom, which was incorporated as part of the whole Siamese kingdom in the early fifteenth century A.D., and it does not mean, as in the modern usage, the North of present-day Thailand. For the C.S. 740 entry Frankfurter translated it as follows;-

> In (740), the year of the horse, the King again conquered Chakangrao, and at that time Mahādharmarājā [of Chiengmai] tried to resist the King's army, but as he saw he could not do so, he paid homage. Modern research can now confirm that, in epigraphic tradition, the title Mahādharmarājā is always associated with the Sukhôthai polity, whereas independent kings of Chiang Mai called themselves Mahārāja (Mahârât).

98) PP/1: 130

99) Seventeenth-century European records call Narésuan the "Black Prince". According to Peter Floris (early 1610s), Narésuan subjugated Cambodia, Lao Lân-Châng, Chiang Mai, Ligor, Pattani, Tenasserim, "and dyvers places and kingdoms, till anno 1605, whenas [sic] the Black King deceased withoute any issue". W.H. Moreland, Peter Floris: 55

or "folded black books", it was copied in 1774 from the first copy.[100] Lastly, the third copy of LP/1680 was presented by Khunying Pathumrâtchawinichai to the National Library in April 1968.[101] It gives the name of the copyist as Chum and the copying date as "Monday, fourteenth of the first waxing moon of C.S. 1149, Goat Year (A.D. 1787)". Chum noted that "the text ends here, do look for further parts". It means that since the fall of Ayutthayâ in 1767, no one has ever come across the complete version of LP/1680.

An abridged chronicle, of very skeletal structure, LP/1680 is reflective of the kinds of archival materials on which it is based. That the compiler made use of an earlier phongsâwadân history is clearly stated in LP/1680's preamble. In 1680, when King Nârâi renovated Wat Chulâmanî, the Royal Monastery where King Bǫrommatrailôk was ordained in 1465, he commanded that the event in 1465 described in the phrarâtchaphongsâwadân be inscribed on stone. The two entries for C.S. 826 and 827 reproduced by the engraver of the Chulâmanî inscription are not from LP/1680, but obviously from a detailed phongsâwadân, probably a proto-LP/1680. The language of both texts is not dissimilar, although the narrative style of the Chulâmanî inscription is more elaborate, whereas LP/1680 is rather terse. I shall compare the two texts below.

LP/1680:

> C.S. 826, Wǫk Sok, "Monkey Year", Somdet Phra Bǫrommatrailôk Châo had the Temple of Wat Chulâmanî built.

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100) Prince Damrong, "Introduction to LP/1680" in PP/1: 129

101) Nâttawiphâ, op.cit.: 223

C.S. 827, Rakâ Sok, "Cock Year", Somdet Phra Bǫromma-trailôk Châo was ordained at Wat Chulâmanî and remained in the monkhood for eight months, after which H.M. returned to secular life.[105]

Chulâmanî inscription: Excerpts from a proto-LP/1680

C.S. 826, Pî Wǫk Naksat, "Monkey Year"; At that time, Somdet Phra Râmâthibǫdî Sî Bǫrommatrailôkkanât Bǫphit Pen Châo had the Temple of Wat Chulâmanî built, where H.M. was to be ordained. On that occasion, the three independent kings (ekkarât), namely, the Brayā of Lân-Châng, the "Mahârât" Banā of Chiang Mai, and the Banā of Hongsâwadî (Pegu) were all moved by H.M.'s religious zeal. They all sent envoys bearing the eight requisites to be presented to H.M.

C.S. 827, Pî Rakâ Naksat, "Cock Year", "tenth of the eighth waxing moon"; Somdet Phra Râmâthibǫdî Sî Bǫrommatrailôkkanât Bǫphit Pen Châo came out for a sacred ceremony. H.M. let his "Somdet" son[103] kneel down before him and pay respect at his feet, and then mounted the royal palanquin. H.M. had five persons ordained as pariwat[104] monks before him. H.M. then donned the ceremonial garments, and all together, 2348 new monks were ordained to accompany him. Somdet Phra Râmâthibǫdî Sî Bǫromma-trailôkkanât Bǫphit Pen Châo had remained in the monkhood for eight months and fifteen days, when, in the fifth month, the "Somdet" son and the nobility, besought H.M. to disrobe and resume the affairs of the kingdom. H.M. complied, and then travelled to the Great City of Ayutthayâ.[105]

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102) PP/1: 137

103) Undoubtedly Bǫrommarâchâ, who was appointed vassal king of Ayutthayâ, when Bǫrommatrailôk reigned at Phitsanulôk.

104) lit. = "exchanging", "revolving", but here = "attendant"

105) "Silâčhârúk Wat Chulâmanî" in PP/1: 160

LP/1680 may have been a recompilation for use as a quick reference, because it is so brief that it resembles an astrologer's record-book. Its internal division is also interesting. The events between C.S. 686 (A.D. 1324/50)and C.S. 862 (A.D. 1500/1) are extremely briefly dealt with; the year date is followed as a rule by a sentence or two such as the instances shown below:-

C.S. 686, "Rat Year",: The principal Buddha statue of Wat Phanèngcherng was first erected.

C.S. 712, "Tiger Year",: On Friday, sixth of the fifth waxing moon, at 9:54 am, the city of Ayutthayâ was founded.

C.S. 731, "Cock Year",: Wat Phra Râm was built. At that time Somdet Phra Râmâthibọdî Châo entered nipphân. His son, Somdet Phra Râmésuan, succeeded to the throne.

C.S. 732, "Dog Year",: Somdet Phra Bọrommarâchâthirât Châo proceeded from Suphanburî and ascended the throne of Ayutthayâ. His Majesty invited Somdet Phra Râmésuan Châo to proceed to and rule at Lopburî.

C.S. 733, "Pig Year",: Somdet Phra Bọrommarâchâthirât Châo proceeded to the North and conquered all the Northern principalities.

....

C.S. 802, "Monkey Year",: At that time a fire broke out in the royal palaces.

C.S. 803, "Cock Year",: A fire broke out at the Trîmuk Throne Hall.

....

C.S. 820, "Tiger Year",: In that year, to promote the Religion, H.M. caused the 500 statues of the Bodhisattva representing his 500 lives to be cast.

....

C.S. 827, "Cock Year",: Somdet Phra Bọrommatrailôk Châo was ordained at Wat Chulâmanî and remained in the monkhood for eight months, after which H.M. returned to secular life.

It appears that the compiler of LP/1680 had made use of an unknown tradition for the events between the founding of Ayutthayâ and Râmâthibǫdî II's reign. Or otherwise, LP/1680 must originally have been copied by two scribes, who had different ways of cropping up the longer text, a detailed chronicle. Events between C.S. 862 (A.D. 1500/1) and C.S. 966 (A.D. 1604/5) are a bit more detailed than in the previous part. What makes the second part stand out is the use of time elements such as "C.S. 865, Pig Year, Friday, eleventh of the eighth waxing moon", "C.S. 877, Pig Year, Tuesday, fifteenth of the eleventh waxing moon, in the morning, at the auspicious moment of 8:20 am.", and so on. These time elements are to be found in the pûm hôn, "astrologer's yearly calendar". The time elements are lacking in the 2/k.125 Fragment and the first ten reigns of LP/1680. I would guess that the chronology from the reign of Râmâthibǫdî II (1491-1529) onwards was revised quite thoroughly by the historians of King Nârâi, but the chronology before that reign was not accorded the time elements because the old pûm hôn had been lost. The time elements in the Chulâmanî inscription is either exceptional or fictitious, as do most time elements in the detailed chronicles.

Probably the urge for a greater degree of accuracy was given impetus by the influence of Chinese historiography and contact with the Europeans in the seventeenth century. Bearing in mind that Chinese etiquette was adhered to in the foreign relations of the Far East, and the letters sent from King Songtham/Intharâchâ (1610-28) to the Japanese Shogun were written in Siamese on a golden plaque and in

Chinese on fine Chinese paper,[106] the Siamese seem to have had an inclination towards Chinese customs and practices. It is perhaps pertinent to dwell for awhile on the Chinese influence during the mid-C17th period and relate it to the number of diplomatic missions sent to China following the fall of Ayutthayâ in 1569.

After regaining its independence in 1584, Ayutthayâ grew from strength to strength. According to LP/1680, the Burmese king, Nanda Bayin, sent several punitive expeditions to bring Ayutthayâ back to vassalage.[107] King Mahâ Thammarâchâ, whom Bayinnaung put on the Siamese throne in 1569, died in 1590 and was succeeded by his son, Narésuan, who was referred to by the Europeans as the "Black Prince" because of his complexion.[108] Towards the end of 1592, the Burmese heir-apparent led a hugh force against Siam. In an elephant duel at the beginning of 1593 between the Burmese heir-apparent and King Narésuan, the former lost his life and the Burmese troops were utterly routed.[109] By 1595, Narésuan was already on the offensive, and in 1599, he pursued the Burmese king to Toungoo but failed to take the Burmese make-shift capital. The most intriguing episode in Sino-Siamese-Japanese relations came in Narésuan's reign.

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106) Khačhon, op.cit.: 140; also E.M. Satow, "Notes on the Intercourse between Japan and Siam in the Seventeenth Century", Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan, 13 (1885): 143

107) According to LP/1680, the Burmese troops were sent against Siam in around January 1585, 1586, 1590, 1592. PP/1: 153-156; For a contemporary account see Ralph Fitch's testimony in Samuel Purchas, Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes, vol. X, Glasgow, 1905: 162-3

108) Same as fn. 99

109) PP/1: 156

According to the Chinese records, Narésuan sent seven envoys to China proposing to send troops to outflank the Shogun Taiko Hideyoshi from the rear in 1592.[110] At that time, Japan had invaded Korea and China was in difficulty repelling the Japanese. Narésuan's offer was turned down because Hsiao Yen, viceroy of the two southern Kwang provinces, suspected Siamese motives.[111] But Narésuan's action was a display of loyalty towards the "big brother" as, wrote a Chinese scholar, T'an Ch'ien, "the king of Siam was angry with the Regent (Kampaku) of Japan. His sense of duty moved him, with neighbourly sympathy, to assist the emperor".[112] This must have made a good impression on the Celestial Court and paved the way for a cordial relationship between the two countries, which culminated strangely enough in the reigns of Prâsâtthọng (1629-56) and Nârâi (1656-88), a time when European powers were also jostling with one another for trading privileges at the Siamese capital. Briefly, after being snubbed by the Chinese, Narésuan must have felt affronted, because this fiery king sent no more embassies to China. And this "cool" period continued to the end of Râmésuan/Ekâthotsarot's reign. But Songtham (1610-28) sent three missions to China in 1617, 1619 and 1623; Prâsâtthọng six in 1634, 1635, 1636, 1643, 1652 and 1653; and Nârâi ten in 1659, 1663 (twice), 1664, 1665, 1667, 1671, 1672, 1673 and 1684[113]

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110) Suebsaeng, op.cit.: 194; For a more detailed discussion of this episode in Sino-Siamese relations see: O.W. Wolters, "Ayudhyā and the Rearward Part of the World", Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland (JRASGB), 3&4 (1968): 166-78

111) Suebsaeng, op.cit.: 195

112) Wolters, op.cit.: 172

113) See number of embassies in Suebsaeng, op.cit.: 199-200

In 1685 imperial presents to the king of Siam were also increased by fifty more bolts of silk than usual.[114] If we could gauge the Chinese influence at the Ayutthayan court by the number of missions sent to China, its peak in the second half of Ayutthayâ's existence fell in the reign of Nârâi, who instead is much talked of in Western literature with regard to the intercourse between Siam and European nations.

It would be rather extreme to cherish the idea that the Chinese tradition and practice was solely responsible for the accuracy of LP/1680 without any reference to the rôle of the Brahman priests and Buddhist monks whose yearly calendars also needed to be precise. And one cannot dismiss the possibility of Western cultural impact either. What is suggested here is that the frequency of tribute-bearing missions sent is nonetheless indicative of Chinese cultural influence. This assumption is made elsewhere concerning Sino-Siamese relations in the two periods of 1371-1433, and 1790-1820, during which the number of embassies sent to China reached a peak and the Chinese cultural impact made itself most felt.[115] If this is in any way relevant to the Prâsatthong-Nârâi period, it is not inconceivable that contact with China could have had some cultural implications, especially during the reign of Nârâi, who was a most famous patron of Siamese literature. Following the upheaval at the end of Nârâi's reign, and the resulting distrust of Europeans, Iranians and Macassarese, one can say that intercourse with China

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114) ibid.: 203
115) See pp. 160 above.

had to be the main channel of foreign influence. In the reign of King Nârâi, many middle-ranking officials holding the rank of Ọk-khun were sent as envoys to Peking.[116] Through these officials, who brought back news of cultural and political developments, Chinese ideas and historical traditions must also have been transmitted to the Siamese at the highest level. It is reported that, during Nârâi's reign, Chinese theatres were very popular at the Siamese court, and the Chinese dramatic troups were sponsored by the king.[117] As a matter of fact, Chinese dramatic plays were based on popular pseudo-histories such as the Romance of the Three Kingdoms and the like. Even until recently, Chinese dramatic art was quite popular.

Where it can be tested by external evidence, namely, contemporary European accounts, Chinese Standard Histories, Burma's Hmannan Yazawin, and Chiang Mai's Râtchawongpakọn, LP/1680 has always been shown to be the most accurate Siamese chronicle.[118] The compiler(s) of LP/1680 displayed what is normally associated with traditional Chinese historiography, that is respect for the established texts. An authority on the subject writes:-

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116) For example, the mission sent to China in 1665 comprised three officials: (1) the chief ambassador, who was Wo-k'un-ssu-lin-la-yeh-mai-ti-li (Ọk-khun Surintharârâtcha-maitrî); (2) deputy envoy, Wo-k'un-hsin-wu-t'un-wa-t'i (Ọk-khun Sîsunthọnwâthî); (3) Wo-k'un-ch'ih-po-wa-ti (Ọk-khun Sîwọrawâthî). Suebsaeng, op.cit.: 199fn.4

117) Skinner, op.cit.: 14; Guy Tachard, Chotmâihet Kân Dern-thâng Sû Prathet Sayâm, "Voyage de Siam des père jesuites", tr. San T. Kômonlabut, Fine Art Department, 1974: 66

118) Vickery, Cambodia after Angkor,: passim.
Prince Damrong, "Athibâi Rû'ang Nai Phrarâtchaphongsâ-wadân" in RA,: passim.

> Traditional Chinese historical criticism aims always to attain categorical affirmation, whereas contemporary scholarship recognizes that history must often be content with a statement of probability. ...the traditional Chinese historian assumes that every documentary source is entitled to respect as sincere attempt at truthful record, which presumably does not venture beyond reliable information.[119)]

There are certain things that differentiate LP/1680 from the other phongsâwadân histories, and which demonstrate its connection with Chinese historiography. Unlike the compilers of the 2/k.125 Fragment and other earlier phongsâwadân -if any had existed at all- represented by the first section of LP/1680 covering C.S. 686-862, the compiler(s) of LP/1680 introduced the time elements in his work quite immaculately. It is as though he had had the overriding aim of reporting "what actually happened". Here we can bring in the comment of Ibrāhim Muḥammad Rabī, the Persian scribe attached to the 1685 embassy sent by the Shah of Iran to the court of King Nârâi, who observed that:-

> One of the customs in Siam is that a special body of Siamese interpreters and scribes at the court prepares reports on everything anyone says or does, no matter how insignificant. The reports are then presented to the king. The Siamese seem very eager over details and there is nothing which they consider to be more low and mean than telling a lie. They are so concerned with the exact truth that if a person changes the slightest detail when giving an account of an event, he is considered an out and out liar.[120)]

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119) C.S. Gardner, Chinese Traditional Historiography, Harvard Historical Monographs XI, 1961: 64

120) John O'Kane, (tr.), The Ship of Sulaimān, Persian Heritage Series, No. 11, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972: 52

Perhaps the obsession with facts of Nârâi's court scribes explains why LP/1680 contains none of the imaginative conversations so characteristic of 2/k.125 Fragment and post-Ayutthayan phongsâwadân. A close look at the latter reveals that later chroniclers were less than vigorous in trying to present the correct time elements.

Owing to its general accuracy, and with the support of external evidence, LP/1680 is the basis on which the early history of Ayutthayâ up to Narésuan's reign can be reconstructed. There are grounds for criticism even here inasmuch as it misses out where events matter most, for instance, the number of Siamese attacks on Angkor prior to the reign of Bǫrommarâchâ II (1424-48). One must bear in mind that, in the selection process, the compiler, despite his objectivity, was the product of his own society and influenced by the traditional Siamese world-view of his time. It must be suspected too, when the compiler fails to accord important events the time elements we would normally see. It implies that a statement has been drawn from another source than the astrologer's yearly calendars (pûm-hôn), and that it could be a myth. To demonstrate this problem, I shall translate a passage from LP/1680 and collate it with some other sources.

LP/1680:

> C.S. 931 (A.D. 1569/70), Snake Year, Sunday, eleventh of the ninth waning moon, at about nine o'clock in the morning, the city of Ayutthayâ fell into the hands of the King of Pegu. On Friday, sixth of the twelfth waxing moon, a prâpdâphisek, "triumphant coronation", ceremony was performed for Somdet Phra Mahâ Thammarâ-

châthirât Chão to ascend the throne of Ayutthayâ. Incidentally, when the King of Pegu returned to his capital, he also took Somdet Phra Mahintharâthirât Chão away with him.[121)]

The Hmannan Yazawin:

"The Glass Palace Chronicle of the Kings of Burma"

Thus on Tuesday the 4th of waning Wagaung Chula Sakkaraj 931 (A.D. 1569) did the capital of Siam fall into the hands of the Burmese a second time, through the treachery of one of her own sons whom fortune placed in high position and rank, but who turned his good fortune to the ignoble end of betraying his own country. ...

King Kyawdin Nawrata /Bayinnaung/ then administered the oath of allegiance to Bra Mahein and all his ministers and nobles. ... ...

On Friday, the 6th of waxing Tazaundmôn 931 (A.D. 1569), that is sixteen days after the coronation of Oya Damayaza /Ǫkyâ Thammarâchâ/, King Kyawdin Nawrata left Yodaya for Peikthalauk on his way to Linzin, and his adventures or rather misadventures in Linzin /Lân-Châng/ territory,...[122)]

vV/1640:

After a few days the King of Pegu brought his forces together and stormed the city of Ayudhya on many sides, but especially at the king's palace. Ǫkyâ Chakkrî (who had command there) did not pack his gunpowder in tightly and did not shoot accurately. When the Peguans approached the court of the king, he opened the gate and let them in.

The Siamese king was so careless that he still stood and watched a cockfight when the Peguans had already captured the court. However, he was led to a certain room in the palace by Phra Suwat (about

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121) PP/1: 149

122) Nai Thien, "Burmese Invasions of Siam, Translated from the Hmannan Yazawin Dawgyi", JSS, 5, 1 (1908): 67

whom much has been said previously) and was poisoned by her.[123] He was thirty-four years old and had been king for seven years.[124]

Caesar Frederick's Contemporary Account (c.1570):

Sion /Ayutthayâ7 was the Imperiall seat, and a great Citie, but in the yeere of Our Lord God 1567 /sic7, it was taken by the King of Pegu, which King made a voyage or came by land foure moneths journey with an Armie of men through his land, and the number of his Armie was a million and foure hundred thousand men of Warre: when he came to the Citie, he gave assault to it, and besieged it one and twentie moneths before he could winne it with great losse of his people, this I know, for that I was in Pegu sixth months after his departure, and saw when that his officers that were in Pegu, sent five hundred thousand men of Warre to furnish the places of them that were slaine and lost in that assault, yet for all this, if there had not beene treason against the Citie, it had not beene lost; for on a night there was one of the Gates set open, through the which with great trouble the King gets into the Citie, and became Governour of Sion: and when the Emperour saw that he was betrayed, and that his enemie was in the Citie, he poysoned himselfe: and his Wives and Children, Friends and Noblemen, that were not slaine in the first affront of the entrance into the Citie, were all carried Captives into Pegu, where I was at the comming home of the King with his tryumphs and victorie, which comming home and returning from the Warres was a goodly sight to behold, to see the elephants come home in a square, laden with Gold, Silver, Jewels and with Noble men and women and women that were taken Prisoners in that

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123) Princess Suwat was Mahâ Thammarâchâ's mother-in-law, a queen of Mahâ Chakkraphat (1548-68)

124) Short History: 77

Citie.[125])

On the whole, Caesar Frederick's account, vV/1640, the Hmannan Yazawin, and the detailed phongsâwadân described the events before the fall of Ayutthayâ in 1569 in the same way, whereas LP/1680 is too brief to be of use for analytical purpose here. There are some discrepancies with regard to the fate of Mahintharâchâthirât in these sources. The two earliest accounts of the Venetian Caesar Frederick and vV/1640 say that he died of poison. The vV/1640 is perhaps a blown-up version of the belief at the time. LP/1680 says categorically that the Siamese king was taken to Burma, and the Burmese chroniclers, who compiled the Hmannan Yazawin in the early C19th, could not decide upon the fate of the dethroned king. If Frederick's account is no fake and he was actually in Pegu in 1569, witnessing the triumphant return of Bayinnaung's troops, we would have to conclude that LP/1680 is wrong, and the Hmannan Yazawin is non-committal.

If the extant copy of LP/1680 is not garbled, there is a curious gap in the period between C.S. 926 and C.S. 930, which was to be filled in the detailed chronicles, C.S. 1136 Fragment, supposedly compiled in the reign of King Bọrommakôt. The three missing entries (C.S. 927, 928 and 929) would be about King Mahâ Chakkraphat's whereabouts. Perhaps the compiler of LP/1680 was so concerned about categorical statements that in the event that he could not find accurate information, he preferred to leave a gap in between.

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125) Samuel Purchas, Hakluytus Posthumus, X,: 111

(4) C.S.1136 Fragment

According to Prince Damrong, the C.S.1136 Fragment was acquired by the Wachirayân National Library in 1910.[126] The manuscript exists in the form of a folded black book, the third volume of a detailed phongsâwadân history copied in C.S. 1136 (A.D. 1774) during the Thonburî interregnum. C.S.1136 Fragment covers the period between C.S. 925 (A.D. 1563) and C.S. 930 (A.D. 1568) during which LP/1680 is reticent. Consequently, the original C.S.1136 Fragment must postdate LP/1680, and this is confirmed by the use of the language which, although similar to LP/1680, is slightly more recent. The text is full of lacunae, but C.S.1136 Fragment bridged the stylisitic gap between LP/1680 and the post-Ayutthayan detailed phongsâwadân. As Prince Damrong demonstrated long ago, we can trace the evolution of the phongsâwadân from LP/1680 through to the C.S.1145 Fragment, the prototype of the post-Ayutthayan phongsâwadân, on the basis of literary criticism and narrative style.[127] This can be done by comparing the passages from these phongsâwadân and seeing how over a century LP/1680 grew into a detailed chronicle.

LP/1680:

/C.S. 925/ ..... In the same year, Phrachâo Lân-Châng /King of Lâos/ sent a royal missive to His Majesty /King of Ayutthayâ/ asking for the hand of the princess, Phra Thepphakasat Chao. His Majesty graciously com-

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126) Damrong, Prince, "Introduction to PP/4", PP/4, Khurusaphâ edition, vol. 3,: 135

127) Damrong, Prince, "Tamnân Nangsu..": 30-1

plied with Phračhâo Lân-Châng's request. At that time Phra Thepphakasat Chão happened to be taken ill, so H.M. decided to send Princess Phra Kèwfâ, another of his daughters, to Phračhâo Lân-Châng instead.

C.S. 926, Rat Year, Phračhâo Lân-Châng returned Princess Phra Kèwfâ to Ayutthayâ with the message that he would insist on Princess Phra Thepphakasat Chão's hand. H.M. then arranged for the princess to be sent to Phračhâo Lân-Châng.[128]

C.S.1136 Fragment:

At that time the King of the White Elephants and Golden Pavilion gave Princess Phra Kèwfâ, his daughter, to Phayâ Lân-Châng in marriage. When the Princess had arrived, Phayâ Lân-Châng said,

> "We asked specifically for the hand of Princess Phra Thepphakasattî and not Princess Phra Kèwfâ. We shall return Phra Kèwfâ to Ayutthayâ and insist again on the hand of Phra Thepphakasattî as We did before".

After the War of the White Elephants had ended, Phayâ Lân-Châng ordered Phayâ Sèn, Phayâ Nakhǫn, and Phayâ Thipmontrî, to escort Princess Phra Kèwfâ back to Ayutthayâ and carry the message to H.M. insisting on the hand of Princess Phra Thepphakasattî. H.M., the King of the White Elephants, complied with the request and arranged for Princess Phra Thepphakasattî to be sent to Phayâ Lân-Châng.

In the fifth month of the Rat Year, C.S.926, H.M., King of the White Elephants, ordered Phayâ Mèn to escort the royal daughter to the court of Phayâ Lân-Châng by way to Samǫsǫ.[129]

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128) PP/1: 148

129) PP/4: 151

C.S.1145 Fragment and the Post-Ayutthayan Phongsâwadân:

C.S. 912, Dog Year, second of the decade, Phrachâo Krung Sî Sattanâkhanahut /King of Lâos/ was informed that the princess born of Queen Phra Sî Suriyôthai, whose body was cut across while riding on an elephant in the war against the King of Hongsâwadî (Pegu), had grown up. He sent his envoys, who carried the royal letter and tributes to the court of Somdet Phra Mahâ Chakkraphat, King of the White Elephants. The letter reads:-

"I, King of Krung Sî Sattanakhanahut, pay homage to the Royal Uncle, King of the City of Angels, Thawârâwadî Sî Ayutthayâ. As I, Your Humble Servant, have still not a chief queen to enable me to continue my family line, I, Your Humble Servant, would like to ask for the hand of your royal daughter, Princess Phra Thepphakasattî, so that she will become the first queen of the Eastern City, and that the friendly relationship between the two kingdoms will prosper forever."

Having learned what was in the letter, H.M. called an assembly of ministers and councillors to consider the matter. They counselled H.M. that as the enmity that existed between Ayutthayâ and Hongsâwadî (Pegu) was like the tuberculosis in H.M.'s chest hard to cure, and Phrachâo Krung Sî Sattanâkhanahut, a king of consequence, had sent a suave letter to H.M., it was very advisable for H.M. to agree for the sake of a friendly intercourse, and the King of Krung Sî Sattanâkhanahut would be a formidable ally in the future war with Hongsâwadî. H.M. thus had a letter drafted which read:

"That Somdet Phrachâo Krung Sî Sattanâkhanahut wishes to become a blood relation of the king of Ayutthayâ is now accepted. Somdet Phra Mahâ Chakkraphat, King of the White Elephants, has granted permission for him to send the guards

of honour to escort the Princess to his country." The Ayutthayan envoys then departed carrying the royal letter for Krung Sî Sattanâkhanahut. Having arrived there they presented the royal letter to the king.

The king of Sî Sattanâkhanahut was greatly pleased. He ordered that the envoys should proceed to Ayutthayâ with 500 servants and some lady officiators. When the envoys arrived, Princess Phra Thepphakasattî was taken seriously ill. The King of the White Elephants hardly knew what to do. H.M. reckoned that,

> "Even if We send a letter telling the truth, it is unlikely that the King of Sî Sattanâkhanahut will believe it. If it is so, he would think that We are in two minds, and this may doom the friendly relationship. It is not appropriate for a king to break his promise."

H.M. decided to give away Princess Phra Kèwfâ instead together with all the regalia fit for a chief queen and 500 male servant and 500 female servants. The envoys returned with Princess Phra Kèwfâ to their country.

Knowing that the princess who came was not Phra Thepphakasattî, Phrachâo Krung Sî Sattanâkhanahut felt disappointed and said,

> "From the beginning We asked for the hand of Phra Thepphakasattî, who was born of Queen Sî Suriyôthai, who sacrificed her own life for the king, her husband, when the king was in jeopardy. Queen Sî Suriyôthai was of a most virtuous family."

He ordered Phayâ Sèn, Phayâ Nakhǫn, and Phayâ Thipmontrî to escort Princess Phra Kèwfâ back to Ayutthayâ and carry a message together with presents to the King of the White Elephants. The message was as follows:-

> "At first Your Majesty promised Princess Phra Thepphakasattî. This news is known to all in Sî Sattanâkhanahut. Now, Your Majesty has sent Princess Phra Kèwfâ in her stead. Though Princess Phra

> Kèwfâ is a thousand times more beautiful than Phra Thepphakasattî, that is by no means equal to the latter's renown. I would feel disgraced forever, and may I, Your Humble Servant, return Princess Phra Kèwfâ to Your Majesty. Please, Your Majesty, send Phra Thepphakasattî to me as Your Majesty had previously permitted."
>
> Somdet Phra Mahâ Chakkraphat, King of the White Elephants, having been informed of the letter and the return of Princess Phra Kèwfâ, felt very embarrassed. Since Princess Phra Thepphakasattî had recovered from her illness, H.M. made preparation for her to proceed with courtiers, 500 male servants and 500 female servants.
>
> In the fifth month, C.S. 913, Pig Year, third of the decade, H.M. commanded Phayâ Mèn to lead a thousand men and escort Princess Phra Thepphakasattî to Sî Sattanâkhanahut. Phayâ Mèn and the envoys then invited the Princess to ride on a golden sedan chair. The procession travelled by land via Samoso.[130]

My translation of the excerpts from the various recensions of the Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ is done on a word-for-word basis. Original titles of the kings of Ayutthayâ and Lân-Châng are left untouched as expressed in the Siamese texts so as to highlight the changes that were effected over a period of time. We can now consider the evolution of the post-LP/1680 phongsâwadân historiography with the following points in mind.

First, LP/1680 and C.S.1136 Fragment appear to share the same chronology. C.S.1136 Fragment contains some con-

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130) Fine Art Department, Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ Chabap Phanchanthanumât (Cherm) Kap Phra Chakkraphatdiphong (Chât), Khlang Witthayâ edition, 1964: 584-7

versations; LP/1680 none at all. It is quite certain that at the time of its compilation, C.S.1136 Fragment was seen perhaps as an improvement on the LP/1680 in matter of language and presentation. Actually, C.S.1136 Fragment filled in a period which the compiler of LP/1680 had left out, i.e. C.S. 926-930.

Second, I do not know what evidence persuaded Prince Damrong to conclude that C.S.1136 Fragment was originally written in Bǫrommakôt's reign (1733-58).[131] It is anyhow difficult to determine the true date of compilation on literary grounds alone, but the best clues are the titles used to describe the Siamese and Laotian kings. The compiler of LP/1680 employed the term Phračhâo to describe the position of both Mahâ Chakkraphat and Chaisetthâthirât, king of Lân-Châng, implying that they were each other's equal. In C.S. 1136 Fragment the title accorded the king of Lân-Châng becomes that of Phayâ, and the title of Mahâ Chakkraphat remains Phračhâo, implying that the king of Lân-Châng was subordinate to the king of Ayutthayâ. This seems to be a classic case of a phongsâwadân history that mirrors the true situation of the age in which it was compiled or revised, while the compiler himself no longer had the real understanding of the age he purported to describe. Towards the close of the seventeenth century, Laos was thrown into a state of confusion in the wake of succession crisis, and one faction summoned the help of Ayutthayâ. Phra Phetrâchâ (1688-1703) intervenee in Laos's succession dispute with the intention

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131) Damrong, "Introduction to PP/4": 136

of strengthening his own legitimacy in Siam, having been a usurper himself.[132] The Siamese chroniclers write profusely about the approach of the king of Lân-Châng, which was seen in the old days as a mark of respect and submission.[133] It was from around 1700 that Lân-Châng became Ayutthayâ's nominal dependency. Thus C.S.1136 Fragment could have been written in any reign during the first half of the eighteenth century, although one could claim it was written during the reign of Bǫrommakôt (1733-58) bacause Ayutthayâ was then the leading power in continental South-East Asia.

Third, the inflation of rank and title for the king of Lân-Châng goes one step further from C.S.1136 Fragment to C.S.1145 Fragment. The king of Lân-Châng is again called Phračhâo in the reported speech of C.S.1145 Fragment but Mahâ Chakkraphat is given the title Somdet Phra, re-emphasizing the relationship between an independent king and his vassal, Phračhâo (Khanthasîmâ), in the Thonburî-early Bangkok terminology being "tributary king".[134] It is interesting that the chronology of the phrarâtchaphongsâwadân had begun to go wrong in C.S.1145 Fragment even before the revising work ordered by Râmâ I in 1795.

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132) Cf. Busakorn, op.cit.: 48

133) Fine Art Department, Phan/1795: 438

134) That the title Phračhâo was used for a tributary ruler is clear and can be seen in the investiture plaque promoting the ruler of Nakhǫn Sîthammarât in Tâk (Sin)'s reign to the status of Phračhâo Khanthasîmâ. See King Chulâlongkǫn's "Comments" in Chotmâihet Krommaluang Narintharathéwî, "Princess Narin's Mémoir", 5th Reprint, Cremation volume for Nângsâo Riap Wisetkun, 31 Oct. 1966: 115-7; Another example is Kâwila, the ruler of Chiang Mai, who, in the first Bangkok reign, was raised in rank from that of Phrayâ to Phračhâo. N.J. Brailey, "Chiang Mai and the Inception of an Administrative Centralization Policy in Siam", Tonan Ajia Kenkyu (Southeast Asian Studies), 11, 3 (Dec. 1973): 309-10

C.S.1145 Fragment:

Copied in C.S. 1145 (A.D. 1783), only two "folded black books" of C.S.1145 Fragment have been discovered, one covering events in the C16th reign of Mahâ Chakkraphat, the other the reign of Mahâ Thammarâchâ. The text of C.S. 1145 Fragment has never been fully published owing to the fact that it is virtually the same as the other post-Ayutthayan phongsâwadân compiled during the reign of Râmâ I. C.S.1145 Fragment is obviously an extended version of LP/ 1680 and C.S.1136 Fragment; despite its narrative style, which is rather pompous and long-winded, there are borrowed passages from previous two chronicles. Its incorrect chronology is evidence that it was not compiled during the Ayutthayâ period. As we can see from the above excerpts, LP/1680 and C.S.1136 Fragment give C.S. 926 as the date when Princess Phra Thepphakasattî was sent to Lân-Châng, whereas C.S.1145 Fragment says it was in C.S. 913, a difference of thirteen years. The latter date does not fit with what can be reconstructed from other sources so it must be wrong.

It would be interesting to know when C.S.1145 Fragment was actually written and the old chronology revised, and why it was done. I shall discuss this later in connection with the other post-Ayutthayan phongsâwadân compiled the first reign of the Bangkok period. It will be pointed out that with the dispersal of court historians following the fall of Ayutthayâ in 1767 Thai traditional historiography was to fall within the domain of scholar-monks' intellectual activity, a process stimulated by Râmâ I's cultural restoration (1782-1809).

The Cultural Restoration of Siam with Special Reference to the Compilation of the Annals of Ayutthayâ During the Early Bangkok Period

The fall of Ayutthayâ in 1767 must have been a shattering experience for the Siamese ruling élite of the eighteenth century. Previously, after King Nârâi's death in 1688 and the bloodbath in its wake, Ayutthayâ had plunged into a long period of internal disturbances. With the exception of the peaceful transition of power from Phra Phetrâchâ to Phrachâo Sû'a in 1703, and from Phrachâo Sû'a to Thâi Sa in 1709, the succession issue forever threatened to bring chaos upon the kingdom. During the long reign of Bọrommakôt (1733-58), however, Ayutthayâ enjoyed comparative peace, and became the greatest centre of Buddhism. In 1751, King Kirti Sri Rajasinghe of Ceylon sent an embassy to Ayutthayâ to ask for Siamese monks to purify the Ceylonese saṅgha. This was a matter of pride for the Siamese at a time when Burma was on the brink of collapse under Mọn pressure. But only sixteen years later, Ayutthayâ was reduced from a powerful kingdom to a heap of ruins. This prompted the Siamese ruling class during the early Bangkok period to look back and try to find out what had gone wrong. It is in this self-investigation that the Siamese began to rebuild their self-confidence.

The Thonburî-Bangkok chroniclers, who had experienced the trauma of the last days of Ayutthayâ, describe the fall of the old capital as the culmination of a gradual process of decline starting from the reign of Phra Phetrâchâ, founder

of the Bân Phlû Luang dynasty back in 1688. Interestingly, the decline in the fortune of the Bân Phlû Luang dynasty was seen from a moral point of view. The great amount of sin committed by the Bân Phlû Luang kings, save Bǫrommakôt, was implicitly as well as explicitly itemized by the compilers. The memory of the reign of the last king of Ayutthayâ, Phra Thînang Suriyâmârin (1758-67) was still fresh. The rotten state of the government, the incompetent reigning king, the ex-king who abdicated for the solitude of the monastery, and thus shirked the responsibility, and the court's general complacency were brought to the fore. The French missionaries who resided at Ayutthayâ at that time reported the lack of military spirit amongst the Siamese troops, and the fact that the king left the defence of the city to Chinese, Christians, foreign contingents, and an English captain, who accidentally visited Ayutthayâ at the critical moment.[135)]

A feeling of despondency is claimed to have begun to permeate the air of Ayutthayâ from the beginning of Phra Thînang Suriyâmarin's reign. The cryptic Phlengyâo Phayâkǫn Krung Sî Ayutthayâ, "A Ditty Prophesying the Fall of Ayutthayâ", was also recited everywhere; it premonitioned a dreadful end to the old capital, prophesied all kinds of freak phenomena, and told of the coming of a holy man.[136)] According to Wannarat/1795, Siamese villagers captured by the

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135) "Chotmâihet Khana Bâtluang Farangset Nai Phèndin Phrachâo Ekkathat, Krung Thonburî Lèh Krung Rattanakôsin Tǫn Ton" (Records of the French Missionaries Concerning Events in Siam from the Reign of Ekkathat to the Early Bangkok Period), PP/39, Khurusaphâ edition, vol. 23:

136) PP/63, Khurusaphâ edition, vol. 37: 128-38

invading Burmese vanguard informed Alaungpaya of this ditty and associated the holy man with the person of the Burmese monarch himself.[137] Both the French materials and the phongsâwadân point out that, beleaguered by the Burmese troops in 1766, some sections of the people of Ayutthayâ accepted that Ayutthayâ was doomed and even voluntarily went over to the Burmese side.[138]

After a long siege from February 1766 to April 1767, the Burmese armies and the Shan contingents entered Ayutthayâ. A French missionary gave an eye-witness account of the Burmese soldiers' indiscriminate behaviour.

> The King of Siam, who was suffering from leprosy, got away but he died at Phô Sâm Ton after the Burmese troops had withdrawn from Siam. After the Burmese had entered the city, they set fire to houses and destroyed almost everything for 15 days. They killed the people indiscriminately no matter whether they were rich or poor, but they killed a greater number of monks. I myself saw the Burmese kill more than 20 monks in one morning.
>
> When the Burmese had burned down all the houses, palaces and monasteries and churches, they prepared to withdraw. They left the city on 15 April 1767.[139]

Siam disintegrated in the aftermath of the Burmese invasion of 1767 and relapsed into the pre-Ayutthayâ conditions. There were five contending factions in different parts of the country. Phrayâ Tâk (Sin), the ex-"Lord of Tâk", who

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137) Wannarat, Somdet Phra, Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ, Khlang Witthayâ edition, 1972: 640 Hereafter cited Wannarât/1805?

138) ibid.: 654

139) PP/39: 61

had led a break-away from Ayutthayâ during the Burmese siege, assembled an army at Chonburî in south-east Thailand. Having gained control of the heartland of Siam, Phrayâ Tâk was proclaimed king, although he was of Chinese extraction. Phrachâo Tâk moved his headquarters to Thonburî. His immediate task was to pacify Siam and expel the Burmese occupying forces from Siam's dependencies. Helped by two able Chakkrî brothers, Thongduang and Bunmâ, Phrachâo Tâk not only succeeded in quelling the other four self-proclaimed kings and their factions in the provinces, but he also held the planned return Burmese invasion at bay. In 1777, all the Lao principalities, including Luang Phrabâng and Wiang Chan (Vientiane), were conquered, Chiang Mai having been brought back under Siamese control since 1774.[140] Phrachâo Tâk's military achievements were undoubtedly great, but the strain of war throughout his reign also began to affect his behaviour in the late 1770s. The tragic end of Phrachâo Tâk came when he turned to Mahāyānist Buddhism for solace and devoted his time to practising meditation. In 1779, it reached the stage where the king believed he was an incipient Buddha. According to the French missionary, Monsieur Koudé, "The king always said that he could fly through the air."[141] Also his outbursts of repressive action turned his subjects against him, and a rebellion broke out. The rebels forced the king to don the yellow robe. When the Chakkrî brothers arrived back from the unfinished Cambodian campaign in 1781 to put the

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140) For details see Klaus Wenk, The Restoration of Thailand under Rama I, 1782-1809, Tuscon, Arz., 1968: 4

141) PP/39: 146

house in order, the fate of Phrachâo Tâk was doomed. The elder Chakkrî brother, Somdet Châophrayâ Mahâ Kasatsúk, succeeded as the next king of Siam, and Phrachâo Tâk, whose insanity had made him unfit to be king, was executed in 1782.

Râmâ I and the Foundation of Bangkok, the "New Ayutthayâ"

One of Râmâ I's urgent tasks when he succeeded to the throne of Siam in 1782, was to transfer the Siamese capital from Thonburî on the western side of the River Châophrayâ, to the old town of Bângkǫk on the eastern side of that river. The king's decision in this matter was motivated not solely by military reasons, but by psychological ones as well, because it meant a fresh start. Phrachâo Tâk would have restored Ayutthayâ to its former greatness had it not been irreparably destroyed by the Burmese in 1767. Thonburî, as a small fortified town, was easier to defend than the remains of Ayutthayâ, and the large-scale building of a new capital by Phrachâo Tâk was out of the question owing to the incessant wars with Burma and the acute shortage of manpower. When the pressure from the Burmese eased off in the last years of Phrachâo Tâk's reign (1767-82), the strain of constant wars had begun to take its toll on the king. Râmâ I came to the throne at a time when Siam had enjoyed a respite from Burmese attacks for some years, and since 1777, during Phrachâo Tâk's reign, trade with China had already begun again to fill the royal coffer.[142] As often suggested, the

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142) It is said that the Chinese court was suspicious of the circumstances under which Phrachâo Tâk became king of Siam. Emperor Ch'ien-lung allowed normal tributary relations to resume only in 1777. Suebsaeng, op.cit.: 271; Skinner, op.cit.: (23)

town of Thonburî was awkwardly situated, and in the event of war, it could well be too exposed to a Burmese force invading from the west.[143] But Burma was experiencing another succession crisis following the murder of King Singu in 1782, and this crisis was followed by a bloodbath, and later, in September 1783, by a Mon rebellion. It was only in the following year that King Bodawpaya succeeded in restoring order in Burma.[144]

Râmâ I found this turbulent period in Burma, a most opportune moment to build a permanent capital of his own. The construction of the new capital began in 1782, and it was to continue until 1785 before it was completed, although the king and the Prince of the Front Palace moved into their new palaces in 1783. The plan for the whole complex of the inner city (the grand palace) was modelled after that of Ayutthayâ. The Grand Palace, representing the abode of the Hindu deity Indra, was surrounded by the residences of the other dignitaries of the kingdom. The whole layout was carefully planned to imitate the heavenly city of the Supreme God Indra, as described in the Buddhist texts and the Treatise on the Three Worlds. In 1786, the new capital was designated by the name of "Krungthep Mahâ Nakhon Amon Rattanakôsin Mahintharâ Ayutthayâ Mahâ Dirok Phop Noppharat

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143) Klaus Wenk, op.cit.: 17; Châophrayâ Thiphâkorawong, Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Rattanakôsin Ratchakân Thi 1, "Dynastic Chronicle of the Bangkok Period, the First Reign", Special edition for distribution in the funeral of Phrachâo Worawongther Krommamün Anuwat Châturon, 1935: 7

144) G.E. Harvey, History of Burma, London, 1925: 266-7

Râtchathanî Burirom...", the essence of which can be translated like this:-

> "The Great Celestial City of the Immortal God Indra, the Sublime Ayutthayâ, the Pleasant City, the Capital of the Nine Precious Stones of the Universe...".[145]

As one can see in the official name of Bangkok, the spirit of Ayutthayâ still lingered on in the early Bangkok period, and the founding of Bangkok was an attempt by the Siamese élite, who had lived through the days of King Bọrommakôt, to recreate another Ayutthayâ.

No sooner had the construction of Bangkok been completed than the Burmese invading forces came. Early in 1785, Bodawpaya (1782-1819) conquered the kingdom of Arakan to his west and then turned his attention to Siam. Like Phrachâo Tâk, and inspired by the white elephant myth, Bodawpaya believed that he was an incipient Buddha, and became convinced that he was destined to be a world conqueror. He personally led the first campaign against Siam in 1785-86.[146] This was to be Burma's last large-scale invasion of Siam, known in Thai texts an "Súk Kâo Thap" or the "nine Burmese armies" inasmuch as Bodawpaya attacked Siam from almost all directions with a superior force of between 103,000 and 144,000 men.[147] The decisive battle took place at Lât Yâ District where the main division of Bodawpaya's army came face to face with the Siamese army under the command of the first-reign Wang Nâ (Prince of the Front Palace). In February 1786, Bodawpaya's vanguard was

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145) Thiphâkọrawong, op.cit.: 91
146) Harvey, op.cit.: 270
147) Wenk, op.cit.: 44

routed, and in a state of panic, the Burmese king and his army retreated in disarray.[148] Other Burmese armies also suffered great losses. Bodawpaya changed his strategy in his second attempt to subjugate Siam in 1786, by despatching a single large army direct towards Bangkok via the Three Pagodas Pass. The Siamese Second King (Wang Nâ) led his army to the Burmese encampments at Thâ Din Dèng and Sâmsop. After three days of fierce fighting involving the use of cannon on both sides, the Burmese were again forced to withdraw with heavy losses.[149] In 1787, the Burmese king tried to regain control of the northern Thai principalities, and the fighting moved to the North. The Burmese laid siege to Lampâng and Pâsâng but were repulsed by an army sent from Bangkok led by the Second King.

In 1787, Râmâ I led the Siamese troops to Lower Burma and tried to capture Tavoy. This endeavour was not succeessful, but it served a useful purpose. According to a French Jesuit missionary's report in 1788, the Siamese had become so vexed with the Burmese invaders that they felt the need to retaliate by making an inroad into old Ayutthayâ territory under Burmese rule to recapture it.[150] Although the king had to withdraw his troops because of difficult terrains, the invasion of Lower Burma was a display of Siam's capability to take the initiative, and a morale booster. In 1791, Râmâ I found an opportunity to extend Siam's sphere of influence to Lower Burma, but the invasion

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148) ibid.; Harvey, op.cit.: 271
149) Wenk, op.cit.: 64
150) PP/39: 192-3; Thiphâkorawong, op.cit.: 146

of Burma in 1793 failed because of miscalculation in military strategy and the lack of co-operation of the Mon population of Tavoy.[151] According to a contemporary account, Râmâ I had to abandon Tavoy and retreat to Siam in January 1793 with the loss of a thousand men and some cannons.[152] Thereafter Burma did not pose a serious threat to Bangkok, although there were two more wars in 1797 and 1802, when Bodawpaya sent his army to retake Chiang Mai, but failed dismally.[153]

The sack of Ayutthayâ by the Burmese in 1767, and the long-drawn-out wars between the two kingdoms between 1767 and 1802 induced a great deal of resentment amongst the Siamese of the early Bangkok period. Râmâ I's main concern was to consolidate the Siamese hold over what was traditionally considered Siam's sphere of influence, i.e. the Lao principalities, the Malay sultanates, and Cambodia. This was practically achieved by 1794 with Râmâ I's investiture of Ang Eng as the Châo Khanthasîmâ, "tributory king", of Cambodia in that year. The decision to give up Tavoy in 1793 was prompted by the fact that Siam could no longer effectively control an area where the Mon population vacillated in their allegiance between Amarapura (Burma) and Bangkok. Although Siam could defend herself successfully against Burma's relentless attacks, the Siamese ruling class were very irate and bitter about the Burmese actions, because they came at a time when Râmâ I was trying to bring Siam back to normality. Râmâ I's inroads into Lower Burma

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151) Wenk, op.cit.: 76-7
152) ibid.: 206
153) Thiphaâkorowong, op.cit.: 228, 258

in 1787 and 1792/3 were carried out in order to warn Burma of Siam's ability to counter-attack. It was during the preparation for the invasion of Lower Burma in 1793 that the Second King, Krom Phrarâtchawang Bọwon Mahâ Surasinghanât, wrote a commemorative poem, Nirât Rû'ang Tî Mû'ang Phamâ, "A Poetic Travelogue on the Occasion of My Campaign against Burma in 1793", expressing his anguish at the way in which the Burmese soldiers pillaged Ayutthayâ, and his diassapointment with the last Ayutthayan ruler and his noblemen for their failure to stand up to the enemy. About Ayutthayâ's past greatness and its plunder by the Burmese, the Second King reminisced with anger and bitterness:-

> The Old Capital was a great store of provisions. Everywhere was to be found plenty of food. People were so happy every day, night and day, that it was as though the dusk would never come, because life was so very enjoyable. No one expected it would turn out as bad as this; the city in ruins, and the people in distress. The streets, the royal temples, and all were irretrievably lost. Even the soil of Ayutthayâ was harmed. The Phra Kân (God of Death), fulfilling the prophecy, imprecated destruction upon every inch of Ayutthayâ. What a horror! The land of Ayutthayâ trembled as though it was hit by waves that battered the shores of the Demon Island of Langkâ (Ceylon). What a shame, the City of Ayutthayâ fell before the eyes of those who did not care about seeing it disappear. Oh! Ayutthayâ was doomed because no one tried to save it. It is all overgrown with trees and wilderness. It will fade from our memory day by day. Oh! the Law of Impermanence. The Old Capital was where the Religion of the Lord prospered. But now the monasteries, the pagodas, and the Buddha statues have been left to decay. The Buddha has entered the parinipphân, and established his Religion (for 5,000

> years). The Religion is not yet terminated, but the čhédî and wihân are gone because of the Burmese. I miss the splendour of the royal palaces, the Three Great Residences of the King.[154]

Of the last Ayutthayan king, the Second King had these words of censure:-

> From now on Ayutthayâ is no more. There will never be another place like the Old Capital. Once a crystal ball has lost its sparkle, how can it ever be restored? Had the misfortune not befallen us, we would still have enjoyed the bliss. The chief cause of the disaster was the incompetent king who did not know how to recruit the right sort of servants. If a man had been in service, he continued to give him food and shelter out of mercy alone, though he did not know how to carry out the royal commands, and always committed wrongful deeds because of sheer jealousy. The ancient wise adage "Never raise an unworthy person to a position of power, or he will mismanage the affairs of the kingdom", was not heeded. Learning nothing from the past, the king lost his royalty, honour and grace, country, family, people, and all possessions. The king did not prepare his soldiers for war, and did not know how to defend the kingdom. The whole thing was like being plagued by worms, and letting it take its course. Those who should have been promoted sénâbodî (ministers), patronized at different levels and entrusted with the defence of the kingdom, were not. They were treated as slaves and servants. When danger loomed the noblemen were ignorant of the proper course of action. When the enemy first approached, they retreated without a fight. The enemy rounded up the dispirited population and burned the houses to ground. This did not serve as a warning. The court was complacent, thinking that the enemy had

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154) Mahâ Surasinghanât, op.cit.: 19

withdrawn and would never come back. They did not learn from the past; all the bad people were gloating over their titles and ranks. When the Burmese returned, no brave ones were found among the king's noblemen. They gave the king false information until the city finally collapsed as utterly as dust. The people died in great numbers, and the country was then laid waste. That was why Ayutthayâ was conquered by the Burmese.[155])

Lastly the Second King pledged to avenge upon the Burmese the fall of Ayutthayâ. One of the most well-known quotations from Siamese literature has come from the pen of the Second King on this occasion:-

> I aim for victory in this endeavour.
> I want to be honoured by the whole country when I have departed from this world.
> For what the Burmese have done to us in former times I will settle our account with them in full.
> Because they have a mind as coarse as that of a Tamil, I will undoubtedly extirpate them.
> This time, let them have no hope that Rattana Angwa (Ava) will escape my hands.
> The Burmese will become slaves of the Thai so that we can use their labour to build Ayutthayâ.[156])

In this belligerent mood the Second King continued to describe the Burmese in the most contemptuous way, and he also cited a cryptic prophecy with respect to the Mon, Burmese King Alaungpaya, and himself.

> The Burmese are unscrupulous (a-dhamma) people. They are bent on harassing every other country. In the past they did not leave us to live in peace. They killed our people and destroyed our towns and

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155) ibid.: 20-1
156) ibid.: 24

> monasteries so that they became jungle everywhere. They do not think about the sinful acts they have committed such as causing many to part with their loved ones. They are untrustworthy wicked people. I will trample them down this time until they become dust. ... ... There was an old prophecy at the time when the Mon attacked Ava that the Hongsa bird would swoop down and drink water in a pond. That bird was the Mon of Hongsâwadî. That Aungzeya /Alaungpaya7, the hunter, rose to power because he had killed the Hongsâ bird symbolized the Burmese attack and conquest of the Mon country. The prophecy has so far been fulfilled. And it is said a powerful tiger will eat the hunter, who had shot and killed the Hongsâ bird. The time is now due. It has to happen. My army fits in with the prophecy, namely, it is the fierce tiger eager to eat the hunter. There was an ancient prediction that Burma would disintegrate. If anyone ever sees this prediction, do write it down. It will come true according to the prophecy. Ava will face disaster now.157)

The Second King condemned the Burmese by depicting them as unscrupulous people. The word a-dhamma has a negative meaning, which is not identifiable with being a good Buddhist or a dhamma, "righteous", person. This must be the most serious charge one person could level against another in the Buddhist world. In citing the old prophecy about the Hongsâ bird, the hunter and the tiger, the Second King tried to relate it to past events and interpreted it in favour of the Siamese action. In the past, a prophecy about the fall of Ayutthayâ had played its part in inducing fatalistic acceptance; psychologically, the Ayutthayan people seemed resigned to the end of Ayutthayâ even before

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157) ibid.: 25

its actual fall in 1767. A prophecy about Aungzeya (King Alaungpaya, 1752-60), representing the then Burma's ruling dynasty, being destroyed by a fierce tiger was a psychological back-up for the Siamese and the Second King in particular. In the reign of Phrachâo Tâk, the Second King had had conferred upon him the rank and title of Châophrayâ Surasî, but he was more commonly known as Phrayâ Sû'a, or the Tiger King, after the manner in which he had attacked his enemies.[158] Leading an army into Lower Burma in 1793, the Second King naturally associated himself with the prophesied tiger eager to kill the Burmese hunter.

Râmâ I's Cultural Restoration and the Literary World

Considering that the Siamese were at war with the Burmese almost continuously for seventeen years between 1785 and 1802, one must say that Râmâ I could claim equally to have achieved a great deal in the field of internal restoration. The king's attention was concentrated first on the sorry state of the saṅgha (the Buddhist monkhood). As a Buddhist king, Râmâ I saw himself playing a double rôle. Located at the apex of the Great Celestial City of the Immortal God Indra, the presence of the king symbolized the supreme power of Indra or Sakka whose rôle in the Buddhist literature was to protect Buddha and his religion whenever a crisis arose. In the Buddhist world, a king could also cherish the idea of being a Universal Monarch, čhakkraphat (Pal.= cakkavatti), implying his own status as the Grand Protector of the Buddhist Faith.

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158) Chulâlongkọn, "Comments", op.cit. 122

In the case of Râmâ I, the promotion of Buddhism was of the utmost importance for two reasons. Following the fall of Ayutthayâ in 1767, the Siamese saṅgha had fallen apart; monks become utterly impoverished, and the saṅgha organization feeble.[159] Phrachâo Tâk had done his best to promote Buddhism. In 1769 he had invited a learned monk from Nakhon Sîthammarât to become the Supreme Patriarch of his kingdom, and the Buddhist Scriptures from that city had been copied and gilded in the same year. But events in 1780/1 had taken a bad turn for the Thonburî king as his belief in meditative methods became an obsession. In an assembly of high-ranking monks the king had asked for their sanction in his pursuits. The senior monks had split into two groups. The sycophants had been obliged to accept that ever a layman could take a short cut to enlightenment without having to don a yellow robe. But the minority of the monks had refused to recognize the king's claims. The king had got into a frenzied state, and orthodox monks were demoted, disrobed, and lashed. This action was seen by the opposition as one of the five unpardonable crimes in Buddhism, and thus Phrachâo Tâk's legitimacy was questioned. When becoming king, Râmâ I reversed his predecessor's decision by reinstating the orthodox monks and demoting those who accepted Phrachâo Tâk's radical claims. By becoming less orthodox in that interval, a large section of the Siamese population had turned to superstition and

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159) C.J. Reynolds, The Buddhist Monkhood in Nineteenth Century Thailand, Unpub. Ph.D. Thesis; Cornell University, 1973: 26

false beliefs. For Râmâ I the existence of two religious factions in his kingdom was unbearable. His task was to bring about a unified saṅgha authority through which unruly monks could be systematically got rid of. It is interesting to note that of the 45 laws made during his reign which Râmâ I included in his official legal compilation, 18, more than a third, were introduced between his first (1782) and second (1785) coronation.[160] Seven of these 18 laws were saṅgha laws.[161] In 1785, there was also a further shift of emphasis from Hinduism to Buddhism in royal ceremonial.[162]

Râmâ I's religious activities –the promulgation of the saṅgha laws and the convening of a Buddhist Council in 1788– must theoretically considered part of a legitimizing process for a king who had a root in the Ayutthayan khunnâng (nobility) class, but no obvious claim to the throne in term of his relation to the previous kings. Somdet Phra Wannarat of Wat Phra Chétuphon (Wat Phô), author of the Pali chronicle, Saṅgītiyavamsa, made this point clear; legitimacy could

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160) L.M. Gesick, Kingship and Political Integration of Siam, 1767-1824, Unpub. Ph.D. Thesis, Cornell Univ., 1976: 114

161) Reynolds, op.cit.: 42

162) In order to conform to the Buddhist Law, Râmâ I ordered a revision of the procedure of the Water of Allegiance ceremony. During the Ayutthayâ period, the Brahman officiators would pay homage to the statuette of Râmâthibọdî I in the Ceremonial Hall first, and then this would be followed by an invocation of the Triple Gem, i.e. "Buddha, Dhamma (Law) and Saṅgha". A law introduced in 1785 required that the Triple Gem be invoked first, and then homage could be paid to the apotheosized Râmâthibọdî, the Hindu gods, the Spirit of the Land, the Spirit of the Air and so on.
KTS: 767-8
Gesick, op.cit.: 115
Dhani Nivat, Rû'ang Somdet Phra Phuttha Yọtfâ Song Fünfû Watthanatham: 6

could be derived from being a just king.[163] As the Siamese monarchy was an institution which embodied most, if not all the Buddhist ideals, a king's prestige was judged by the extent to which he devoted himself to the Religion and the well-being of the monks. No other Thai king before Râmâ I, with the exception, perhaps, of King Lithai of Sukhôthai and King Tilôk of Chiang Mai, could claim to have contributed more to the saṅgha and the promotion of Buddhism. Like King Tilôk (1441-87), who sponsored a Buddhist Council in 1476, Râmâ I must have hoped that another Buddhist Council in 1788 would help reconcile the two religious factions, besides the fact that, having obtained the Lao and Mon versions of the Buddhist Scriptures, there was a need to convene the learned monks in order to produce an authoritative edition.[164] It was deemed that Râmâ I's prestige was enhanced by the Buddhist Council of 1788 because, as Somdet Phra Wannarat pointed out, no Ayutthayan king had ever convened a Council to halt the decline of Buddhism.[165]

Râmâ I's decision to realize a perfect Buddhist society and return to orthodoxy began early in his reign. Only five months after ascending the throne, Râmâ I ordered that his court officials observe the Five and Eight Buddhist Precepts every day because this was better than donating the four requisites in great quantity but without sincerity, i.e.

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163) See section on the Saṅgītiyavamsa below, and cf. Craig J. Reynolds, "Religious Historical Writing and the Legitimation of the First Bangkok Reign" in Anthony Reid and D.G. Marr, (eds), Perceptions of the Past in South-east Asia, Singapore: Heinemann, 1979: 90-107

164) Thiphâkorawong, op.cit.: 160-7

165) Coedès, "Une recension palie": 23

spiritual training of oneself was better than displaying one's wealth in donations to the Religion.[166] The king insisted that from that time on, monks who gave sermons on the Vessantarajātaka should adhere as much as possible to the original Pali version, and the use of light-hearted vulgar expressions was forbidden.[167] In 1789, following the conclusion of the Buddhist Council, the king began to crack down on undisciplined monks, and the eighth saṅgha law was announced condemning those who indulged in debauchery.[168] In 1782 the king had also laid down rules for the secular population. In the announcement it was stated that:-

> His Majesty the King graciously announces that previously all the ministers and officials in the Royal Palace, all the female courtiers including the royal consorts, all court servants, those who serve in the Front Palace under the Second King, those who serve under the princes, and all town officials, were required to set their mind upon the four righteous ways (khadī-tham-thang-sī) and to observe the precepts strictly so that a good deal of merit could accumulate for them in this world as well as in the next. His Majesty is concerned now that people have started to gather and gamble unscrupulously without fear of sin. It is damaging to one's present life, and it will mean long suffering in Hell in the next. Furthermore, there has already been a decree warning that if anyone is found guilty of drinking alcohol or gambling, he will be given three rounds of the lash and stripped of all titles and rank. As long-serving officials have turned a blind eye to the decree, and

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166) KTS: Kot Phra Song, "Saṅgha Law", of 1782, p. 545
167) ibid.; Dhani Nivat, op.cit.: 21
168) KTS: 560-6

new officials have not been informed of it, His Majesty commands that from now on if anyone is found drunk or gambling, no matter where it takes place, and if he is proved guilty , he will be given three rounds of the lash, and to augment the punishment, be tattooed on the forehead. As for the owners of gambling dens, the punishment will also be three rounds of the lash.[169]

But in the process of reintroducing the Siamese to orthodoxy, Râmâ I and the saṅgha used persuasion as well as coercion. In its effort to stamp out animism and superstition, the king recognized the very fact that in time of distress and difficulty ordinary people usually failed to cling to the true Religion but turned to animism and superstition, and for that reason, they needed re-education. Râmâ I pointed out in one of his laws that the Triple Gem had meaning only when the people had some faith in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha. The law reads in part:-

> Presently, many men are ignorant. Once they are in distress, their mind is unstable and rejects the benevolence of the Triple Gem in favour of ghosts, devils and nymphs. Those who are wise worship the Spirit of land also, but they think of it as friend and protector, never as a better thing than the Triple Gem.
>
> If a man gives up the Triple Gem and turns to ghosts, devils and nymphs..., his way to take refuge in the Triple Gem will exist no more.[170]

In order to set a good example, all officials, governors and town administrators were given instructions not to make animal sacrifices but to observe the precepts and give

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169) Quoted in Dhani Nivat, op.cit.: 26-7

170) KTS: Phrarâtcha Kamnot Mai, "New Decree", of 1782; p. 755-6

precedence to Buddhism over animism.[171] There is no other period in Siamese history in which the king was so concerned about the decline of Buddhism that he imposed a code of moral conduct upon his subjects. In fact, in the last saṅgha law issued in 1801, 128 monks were found guilty of misconduct on various counts ranging from alcoholic drinking, gambling, going to the theatre, committing adultery, unlawful dealing with foreign merchants, to quarrelling. These monks were disrobed and sentenced to hard labour.[172] Râmâ I's drastic measures were taken in order to bring back some respectability to the saṅgha in general, and to purify it in particular.

In his campaign to bring about a moral-conscious society, Râmâ I realized that some initiatives had to be taken on the the saṅgha as well as secular sides. The convening of the Buddhist Council in 1788 ensured that harmony was restored to the once deplorable saṅgha. A complaint to the king in 1805 about irregularities in legal proceedings prompted him to seek to redress the situation and order a new codification of the common law inherited from Ayutthayâ times. In the preamble of the Laws of Three Seals, which was codified in 1805, Râmâ I made a reference to the "Ancient Rājanīti" in connection with the new codification of Siamese law.[173]

The Rājanīti, "Treatise for a King", is believed to have been written by two Brahmans, Anantayân and Khanamisaka, probably in the early part of the Buddhist Era. The Siamese

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171) ibid.
172) Dhani Nivat, op.cit.: 26
173) KTS: 2

version written in Pali is a mixture of Buddhist and Hindu principle.[174] Its 153 clauses deal with the attributes that make a king a great king. Unlike the majority of Buddhist texts which deal with spiritual achievements in the further stages of life, the Rājanīti emphasizes the "benefits that come before your eyes".[175] To quote a passage from this treatise,

> "The King so well-versed in the science of laws that he commits it to his heart, and knows every aspect of it well, will not meet with disaster. Furthermore, he will conquer all dominions, and enjoy heavenly bliss".[176]

According to this important work, a king has a moral duty towards his subjects because he is like the owner of an orchard, who "ought to pick up the flowers in full bloom, look after the burgeoning plants, support the nearly falling trees, often uproot weeds and parasites, and separate tender plants and stronger plants from the main trunk of a tree [so that they can grow]".[177] The people have to prosper for "the subjects' livelihood is the king's livelihood".[178] All these assertions undoubtedly represent the philosophy behind Râmâ I's activities in religious as well as secular affairs.

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174) Sombat Chanthawong and Chai-anan Samutthawanit, Khwâm Khit Thâng Kânmû'ang Lèh Sangkhom Thai, "Political Ideas and Thai Society", Bangkok: Institute of Thai Studies, Thammasât University, 1980: 127
175) ibid.: 128
176) ibid.: 129
177) ibid.: 131
178) ibid.: 132

The New Trend in Siamese Literature

The constant wars with Burma and the return of the Siamese court to Buddhist orthodoxy during the reign of Râmâ I created an atmosphere in which a new kind of literature was written. During the Ayutthayâ period, court literature was written for theatrical performance, and normally, it was composed in the most sombre mood. The Ayutthayan poets would seek to present the king as a godlike figure. But most literary works, no matter whether they were written for religious or other purposes, served a ceremonial function. For instance, the Prakât Ongkân Chèng nâm, "Oath on the Drinking of the Water of Allegiance", was read during the twice-annually drinking of the sacred water by the king's officers and servants to pledge their absolute loyalty. The Kâp Hé Rû'a, "Poetic Boat Song", a poem written by Châofâ Kung, Bọrommakôt's son, was chanted during the royal boat trips in the provinces. Towards the end of Ayutthayâ, however, the court seems to have already been influenced by what we could term "popular" literature.[179)]

The process of change in Siamese literary traditions during the first reign of the Bangkok period was not unexpected. A great number of literary works must have been lost because of the Burmese plunder of Ayutthayâ in 1767. A search for valuable works was ordered by the king, not only in Siam but also in the tributary states.[180)] This helped widen the vision of Siamese scholars. While trying

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179) Nidhi Aeusrivongse, Watthanatham Kadumphî, op.cit.: 30; Cf. similar contemporary trends in Tokugawa Japan.

180) ibid.: 65-6

to preserve certain traditions, change was possible because the court had adopted a new attitude towards the kind of literature it wanted to sponsor; it saw fit to place the emphasis on the edifying aspect of a literary work. This change of attitude corresponded with the increasing influence of Buddhism and Buddhist scholars at Râmâ I's court. Many religious texts such as the Jinakālamālī and Rattanabimba-vamsa were either recopied and gilded or translated into Siamese. Where important works could not be found, the king commissioned his scholar-monks to compile them anew. One of the most interesting works of this period is the so-called Traiphûm Lôkkawinichaikathâ, "An Exposition on the Three Worlds". It was first compiled in 1783, but revised by Phrayâ Thammaprîchâ in collaboration with Phra Phutthakôsâ-čhân in 1802/3 at the command of the king. The main difference between the Traiphûm Lôkkawinichai and the missing Téphûmikathâ (commonly known as Traiphûm Phra Ruang) on which it was modelled lies in the fact that the latter is purely a description of the Buddhist cosmography, whereas the former also concentrates on Buddhist moral principles.[181]

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181) The so-called Téphûmikathâ is reputed to have been composed in A.D. 1345 by King Lithai of Sukhôthai. This claim, however, has convincingly been refuted by Michael Vickery. The extant copy, probably an Ayutthayan fake, was written down in 1778 by Phra Mahâ Chuâi of Wat Klâng, Pâknâm. The fact that, only five years later, Râmâ I ordered the compilation of a new treatise on Buddhist cosmography suggests that his court did not know of the existence of Phra Mahâ Chuâi's Téphûmikathâ. In fact the preamble of the Traiphûm Lôkkawinichai makes no reference at all to the original Traiphûm.
Prince Damrong, "Introduction", Traiphûm Phra Ruang, Khurusaphâ edition, 1963: 5; Nidhi, op.cit.: 27; Reynolds, The Buddhist Monkhood: 46

A break with Ayutthayan literary tradition is manifest in early Bangkok literature. The myriad forms of versical metres, once the trademark of court literature, were beginning to make way for the simpler klon-bot-lakhon, although the latter had belonged to the common people during most of the Ayutthayâ period. Râmâ I is reported to have been a co-authors of four plays, Râmmakian, Unnarut, Dâlang, and Inao, which are all written in the refined klon-bot-lakhon. And others like the Second King, Chaophrayâ Phra Khlang (Hon), and Phra Thepphamôlî (Klin), all wrote in the klon metre, which was easy for the reading public to understand.

Another aspect of early Bangkok literature that is worth mentioning is its sense of "realism", something which one can hardly find in Ayutthayan literature.[182] Nidhi Aeusrivongse, in his study of early Bangkok literature, associates this new feature with the rise of a bourgeois class in Siam.[183] In the new literature we see the gradual decline of the God-King image of the king. No longer was the king presented in the light of reincarnated god. The change of emphasis is evident in the eulogy which was customarily written at the beginning of a Siamese literary work. Of this notable change of attitude, Nidhi writes:-

> Nonetheless, one can notice the difference between the proems composed by some poets of the early Bangkok period. The descriptions of the capital city had become more important than before. But more significantly, the poets, in lauding the king and glorifying his city

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182) ibid.: 16-7

183) ibid.: 183-200

chose to extol what the king had actually achieved. Châophrayâ Phra Khlang (Hon)'s Lilit Sîwichai Châdok apparently represented a departure from the norm. In its honorific proem, the king was praised not as a god, but because he had won victories over the Mọn, the Lao, the Cambodians, the Chiang (Mai) people, and the Vietnamese. It adduces evidence to describe Phrachâo Tâk's military achievements. The Lilit Phayuhayâttrâ Phetphuang, written by the same poet at the king's command, did not talk of the king as god either. Râmâ I's proem to the Râmmakian is a good example of how the poet(s) prefers using real life to describe the king to presenting him as god. This can be seen in this work which describes Râmâ I's accession to the throne, how he put down opposition, the extent of his religious fervour, how much he donated to the Religion, how he convened the Buddhist Council, and how he ordered the renovation of the Royal Temple of Wat Phra Chétuphon, etc. The change in this respect deprived the ceremonial proem of its sacred character, because it began to look more like the preamble of a book.[184]

Another aspect of Siamese literature during Râmâ I's reign was the influence of foreign literature upon the evolution of stylized prose in Siam. Formerly, during the Ayutthayâ period, only works written in verse were considered literary masterpieces. Prose was used in works of a serious nature such as legal materials, royal decrees, and the phongsâwadân. The adaptation of foreign themes appears to have captured the imagination of the Siamese élite in the early Bangkok period. Apparently, the first foreign work to have been translated into Siamese, in Bọrommakôt's reign (1733-58), was the so-called Nithân Sipsọng Liam, "Tales of Twelve

184) ibid.: 27-8

Corners".[185] Its Persian original may have been one of the texts presented by the Shah of Iran's ambassador to King Nârâi in 1685. One may assume that the translation of a foreign text belonging to an entirely different culture necessitated the use of prose rather than verse. But Nithân Sipsǫng Liam has also a serious moral tone.

This Persian-derived work was temporarily lost in 1767. It must have been a prized possession of the late Ayutthayâ court. Re-translated in 1782, the Nithân Sipsǫng Liam, also to be known as the Nithân Irân Râtchatham, "The Tales of the Persian King's Judgements", was the first in a series of foreign loans, which conformed with the Siamese court's predilection for edifying works.

Most of the translations from foreign materials are historical texts. The Mǫn Chronicle, Râchâthirât, was translated into Siamese in 1785 by a group of scholars headed by the famous Châophrayâ Phra Khlang (Hon). The purpose of this translation is stated clearly in the preamble. Râmâ I:-

> hopes that it will be of great help and benefit to member of the royal family, officials of high as well as low ranks of both the military and civilian wings. His Majesty wishes them to commit it to memory so that their wisdom will grow in the future.[186]

The Râchâthirât, "King of Kings", has always been regarded as one of the best Siamese works ever to have been written in prose. It set the standard for later works to emulate. In the 1790s, and not later than 1806, two Chinese

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185) Prince Damrong, Sân Somdet, 17,: 77

186) Phra Khlang (personal name Hon), Châophrayâ, (tr.), Râchâthirât, Bangkok: Sinlapa Bannâkhân, 1961: 1

texts were translated into Siamese at the king's order. The first was the Sâmkok, "Romance of the Three Kingdoms", which was polished by Châophrayâ Phra Khlang (Hon) to the highest standard. The Châophrayâ died in 1805, so the translation of this Chinese semi-historical novel must have begun many years before his death.[187] Another Chinese History, Saihan, was translated first by the Chinese scholars into coarse Siamese, and then its narrative style was refined by another group of Siamese scholars under the supervision of the Prince of the Rear Palace (Wang Lang). As the Prince died in 1806, we can perhaps presume that the translation of both the Romance of the Three Kingdoms and Saihan were commissioned by Râmâ I at the same time. Probably both works had been completed some years before 1805.

Both the Romance of the Three Kingdoms and Saihan have enjoyed great popularity amongst the Siamese since their first publication by Dr. Dan Beach Bradley's printing firm in 1865.[188] The Romance of the Three Kingdoms in particular, was regarded by the Siamese ruling class as a kind of manual of war. It was even referred to Râmâ II in his play, Khâwî, as the Phichai Songkhrâm Sâmkok, "The Art of War, Sâmkok".[189] It is intriguing to know why this Chinese historical novel attracted the attention of Râmâ I and his

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187) Damrong, Prince, Tamnân Nangsŭ Sâmkok, "Account of the Chinese Romance of the Three Kingdoms", Cremation volume for the funeral of Somdet Phra Pituchâ Châo, Sôphon Phiphatthanâkŏn, 1928: 9; Schweisguth (op.cit.: 195) reckons the Sâmkok was translated from the San Kuo Chi Yen in c. 1802. Note that the Chinese text was only translated into English in 1925.

188) ibid.

189) ibid.

court. Consisting of 95 samut-thai, "The Art of War, Sâmkok" tells the story of the wars between the various factions in China during the period between A.D. 220 and A.D. 265. Probably, the Siamese were not so much interested in the history of ancient China as unfolded by the author of the Sâmkok as the exciting episodes expounding psychological warfare, military stratagem, plots and counter-plots, and moral trainings and principles.

It is most likely that the Siamese had been familiar with the Sâmkok even in the late Ayutthayâ period, as episodes from this famous Chinese historical novel would often be performed on stage, whenever a Chinese theatre was organized. I would suggest that, following the fall of Ayutthayâ in 1767, the Siamese ruling class must have questioned the practical value of their traditional way of conducting warfare. The morale of the people had been rather low, so the principal aim of Siamese literature in the 1790s would have been to restore self-confidence and self-respect as we have seen with the Second King's Nirât Rû'ang Tî Mû'ang Phamâ, in which he talked about bringing back some Burmese slaves to rebuild Ayutthayâ. "The Art of War, Sâmkok" was translated and publicized with the specific purpose of adding a new dimension to Siamese military thinking.

Roughly in the same period when the Romance of the Three Kingdoms and Saihan were being translated from the Chinese originals, Râmâ I also sponsored another major work, the Râmmakian, the Siamese version of the great Indian epic, the Rāmayana, which was originally written in Sanskrit verse by the Indian poet, Valmiki. Although many Thai royalists

claim that Râmâ I himself wrote the Râmmakian in 1798, this seems highly speculative. The Siamese Râmmakian is based structurally on the Rāmayana, but according to one authority, its story "is full of local Thai legend and is different from Valmiki's story in a number of ways".[190] In fact the story of the Râmmakian has a setting in Bangkok of the late eighteenth century, and the hero of the story, Râmâ, is the image of Râmâ I himself. What should surprise the reader is the fact that the writer decided to give the most prominent rôle to Hanumân, the Monkey King, who is Râmâ's chief general. Phra Lak, Râmâ's younger brother and friend in need, represents no one else than the Second King. The Râmmakian has a highly edifying value, because in Hanumân one can find the very mark of a true soldier. The Monkey-King is brave, loyal, considerate, and ready to die in battle against the enemies of his masters, Râmâ and Lak. Râmâ I would want the Râmmakian to inculcate these ideas in his soldiers.

The Past Revisited and the Moral Lessons: The Post-Ayutthayâ Recensions of the Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân

The writing of the Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ during the first reign of the Bangkok period must be seen essentially as part of the cultural restoration of the time. Consequently, the dynastic histories were written and recompiled in the same spirit as the majority of literary works produced in the period between 1785 and the 1790s. Besides being an element of regalia, the phrarâtchaphongsâ-

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190) Theodore Helene Bofman, The Politics of the "Ramakian", Unpub. Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. of Michigan, 1978: 19

wadân compiled during this particular period were intended equally for edifying purposes for the ruling class. But what makes the post Ayutthayan chronicles so different from those of Ayutthayâ is the style of narrative, which is as emotionally expresive as one would find in the prose literature of the early Bangkok period. The phongsâwadân had become part of the new literary scene; the new emphasis on the literary style and pedagogical value of a phongsâwadân history seems to have outweighed the obsession with facts and correct chronology. The compilers showed no sense of anachronism, and at each stage, more interpolations were added so that they differentiate chronologically the Bangkok-compiled phongsâwadân from the Ayutthayâ ones.

The consensus opinion is, many government papers and documents, including the phongsâwadân, were lost, following the Burmese sack of the old capital in 1767. During Phračhâo Tâk's 15-year reign a number of old documents were recollected. In 1774, for example, the two old fragments of the Ayutthayan phongsâwadân: LP/1680 and C.S.1136 Fragment, were recopied. We know that a recension of the phrarâtchaphongsâwadân was copied (not compiled or revised) in 1783, in the second year of Râmâ I's reign. Prince Damrong suggested that this recension, the C.S.1145 Fragment, was compiled in the reign of Phračhâo Tâk.[191] In matter of language, the C.S.1145 Fragment was an improvement on the C.S. 1136 Fragment, but in matter of chronology, it belonged to another tradition.

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191) Damrong, "Tamnân Nangsü..": 35-6; Trî Amâttayakun, op.cit.: 46

The question is: "When was the C.S.1145 Fragment actually compiled?" In the absence of a complete phongsâwadân history, and confronted by the various traditions, the compilers would have been tempted to choose what they considered to be the most useful materials. The discovery of LP/1680 and the C.S.1136 Fragment, both of which are incomplete, could have prompted Phrachâo Tâk to order the recompilation of a new phongsâwadân history, as tradition would require a Siamese king to do. Also, one has to take into account the rise of scholar-monks at the court of Phrachâo Tâk and Râmâ I, and associate it with the tamnân element in the new phongsâwadân histories. Phra Thamthirârâtmahâmunî (Chün), who was to become Phrachâo Tâk's Supreme Patriarch, was perhaps responsible for the C.S.1145 Fragment as well as the Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Thonburî, "Dynastic Chronicle of the Thonburî Period". Basing, in terms of contents, on the C.S. 1136 Fragment, the C.S.1145 Fragment was compiled when both C.S.1136 Fragment and LP/1680 were available. The compiler would have had no means of knowing that C.S.1136 Fragment and LP/1680 were the authoritative recensions. It is clear that the compiler, whoever he may have been, had brought into play another tradition, with which he was perhaps more familiar.

An oral tradition of the nineteenth century had it that the detailed Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ had been based on two Pali works known as the Mahāyuddhakāravaṃsa, "History of the Great Wars", and the Culayuddhakāravaṃsa, "History of the Lesser Wars".[192] These two works were com-

192) Frankfurter, op.cit.: 11; Cf. Damrong, op.cit.: 38-9

posed in Pali by the great chronicler, Somdet Phra Wannarat of Wat Phô. When they were discovered accidentally in 1917, Mahāyud- turned out to be the Mon Chronicle entitled Râchâthirât, already rendered into Siamese in 1785, and the Culayud- was actually a version of the history of Ayutthayâ, written almost in the tamnân tradition. The discovered Culayud- contains only two fascicles, just enough for comparison with other texts.[193] Recently, the Siamese version of Culayud- was published under the title Chunlayutthakârawong Khwâmriang. It contains the full first fascicle and the beginning part of the second, which overlaps with the beginning part of Culayud-. The comparison of the two works reveals that Chunlayut is the Siamese translation of the first fascicle (tamnân history of Phra Ruang of Sukhôthai) of Culayud-.[194] The Culayud- was by no means an original work by Somdet Phra Wannarat, as the author himself acknowledges an earlier work called Culavamsa, the original of which is lost.[195] A glance at the chronology of the Culayud and the detailed phongsâwadân which were based on the C.S.1145 Fragment, will tell us that from the reign of Râmâthibodî I to that of Borommarâchâ II, both the Culayud- and the detailed phongsâwadân belong to the same tradition.[196] It is not impossible that the compiler of the C.S.1145 Fragment may have used the Culavamsa (proto-Culayud-) as the basis for revising LP/1680's chronology, if the C.S.1145 Fragment were compiled in Phrachâo Tâk's reign.

193) For details see Prince Damrong, "Introduction", Somdet Phra Wannarat, Culayuddhakāravamsa, Cremation volume for the funeral of Phrayâ Phahonlayâthin, 1920
194) PP/69, Khurusaphâ edition, vol. 40: 260-78 and 41: 1-42
195) Culayud-: 36
196) See Appendix III (A)

The Saṅgītiyavaṃsa,

"History of the Buddhist Councils"

Consisting of seven fascicles of palm-leaves, the Saṅgītiyavaṃsa[197] was written in 1789 by Phra Wimonlatham (the future Somdet Phra Wannarat of Wat Phra Chétuphon) to commemorate the Buddhist Council which was convened in the previous year. The Saṅgīti/1789 was conceived as a Buddhist "universal" history, and perhaps its writer may have seen himself making the same contribution to the religion and the new king's legitimacy as Phra Rattanapanyâ, the great Chiang Mai historian and author of the Jinakālamālī, did for the establishment of the Siñhalese sect at Chiang Mai and King Tilôkkarât's legitimacy in the fifteenth century.[198]

Five copies of the Saṅgīti/1789 have been known to exist in Cambodia,[199] but only one copy -that of Wat Inthârâm, Bangkok- has been discovered in Siam itself.[200] G. Coedès translated into French in 1914 the entire Chapter 7 from the manuscripts of Wat Phra Kèw and Wat Phôthiwan, both in Phnom Penh. The Pali manuscript belonging to the Wachirayân National Library was translated by Phrayâ Pariyattithammathâdâ (Phè Tâlalak) and published in its entirety in

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197) According to G. Coedès, op.cit.: 2, the correct Pali word should be Saṅgītivaṃsa, not Saṅgītiyavaṃsa.

198) Incidentally the Jinakālamālī was recopied and gilded on the palm-leaves during the Buddhist Council of 1788. Sèng, op.cit.: 17

199) Coedès, op.cit.

200) Wimonlatham, Phra, Saṅgītiyavaṃsa, "History of the Buddhist Councils", translated into Siamese by Phrayâ Pariyattithamthâdâ (Phè), Cremation volume for the funeral of H.R.H. Krommakhun Phetchabûn Intharâchai, 1923: 15

1923. There are some minor differences in the Pali versions reproduced by Coedès and Prince Damrong due evidently to scribal errors in the process of recopying.[201)]

The Saṅgīti/1789 is divided into nine chapters with many sub-headings. The Saṅgīti/1789 is not an original work, and looks more like an updated version of the Jinakālamālī in matter such as organization and style of narrative.

Chapter I is entitled Jambudīpasaṅgītiniddesa. It deals with the history of Buddhism from the prediction of Dīpaṅkara Buddha to the Third Buddhist Council sponsored by King Aśoka. It draws heavily from the Pali texts, especially the Mahāvaṃsa.

Chapter II bears the title Laṅkādīpacatutthavārasaṅga-haniddesa. It relates how Buddhism arrived in Ceylon. Most of the information is drawn from Chapter IV-VIII of the Saddhammasaṅgaha, which itself is based on the Mahāvaṃsa.

Chapter III-VI is a reproduction of the religious history of the North of Thailand from the Jinakālamālī. It deals with the history of Buddhism in Ceylon, Hariphunchai and Chiang Mai, together with the various Buddhist Councils.

Chapter VII is entitled Anukkamachatimsarājaniddesa, "History of the Thirty-Six Kings". It is actually a brief history of Ayutthayâ, retold from a Siamese text. Its chronology from the reign of Râmâthibọdi to that of Prasâtthọng

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201) Some of these differences will be discussed in the following pages. Whether miscopying has transformed the text into a bad one is difficult to say. According to Coedès, the style used by Phra Wimonlatham is awkward and the Pali vocabulary often incorrect. "Une recension palie": 3

corresponds with vV/1640, so Phra Wimonlatham may have used a manuscript whose original dated back to the second quarter of the seventeenth century. The title of this chapter is quite misleading, because it deals with 33 kings of Ayutthayâ, not 36 as stated.[202] It is likely that Phra Wimonlatham had a copy of the tamnân history of Ayutthayâ, which also included three of the pre-Ayutthayan kings, probably Râmâthibǫdi I's immediate ancestors, because in another Pali chronicle, the Culayuddhakāravaṃsa, Phra Wimonlatham (Somdet Phra Wannarat) traced the history of Ayutthayâ back to legendary times. As Saṅgīti/1789 presents the history of Ayutthayâ as part of the long history of Buddhism, it would seem appropriate to leave out the legendary kings. This history of Ayutthayâ ends with the Burmese sack of the Siamese capital in 1767.

Chapter VIII is entitled Navamadhammasaṅgahaniddsa. It tells the story between 1767 and the convening of the Buddhist Council in 1788. This represents the climax of the Saṅgīti/1789 from the writer's own point of view and experience. Phra Wimonlatham was one of the orthodox monks disrobed and demoted by Phrachâo Tâk in 1781 He was re-instated by Râmâ I as a prominent monk, so he was the chief spokeman for the new dynasty in this religious chronicle. As one of the leading scholar-monks, Phra Wimonlatham chaired the committee for the revision of the Phra Satthawiset, "Grammatical Treatise".[203] In contrast to the previous chapter in which the writer tried to point out that the

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202) See: "List of the Kings of Ayutthayâ" in Coedès, op.cit.:31
203) Thiphâkǫrawong, op.cit.: 168

decline of Ayutthayâ was inevitable because the kings of Ayutthayâ gradually turned away from the teaching of Buddha, this chapter highlights the religious activities of Râmâ I and the Second King still leaving Phrachâo Tâk also generally condemned.[204] The Saṅgīti/1789 was written to present the Chakkrî brothers in the best possible light at the expense of the whole history of Ayutthayâ and even the reign of Phrachâo Tâk.

Chapter IX is entitled Nānāānisaṃsacetiyathanapan-cantaradhānaniddesa. In this concluding chapter, the writer elaborates on religious subjects: the nature of merits and good works, and the five antaradhāna or modes of the disappearance of the Buddhist Religion.

Like most writers of religious chronicles, Phra Wimonlatham saw history as an unfolding manifestation of the ultimate truth. The fall of Ayutthayâ was recorded in the Saṅgītiyavamsa "so as to demonstrate the cause of compassion and the truthfulness of the trailak, namely, the Three Doctrines: Doctrine of Impermanence, Doctrine of Unstability, and Doctrine of Nothingness".[205] In this kind of work, the writer needs to show some concern about the state of Buddhism and to identify the chief cause of its decline. Phra Wimonlatham referred to King Lithai's prophecy,[206] and said unequivocally that war had contributed most to the sorry state of the Religion and the suffering of mankind. According to his reckoning, the

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204) Wimonlatham, op.cit.: 423

205) ibid.: 421

206) See: Chapter I, pp. 57 above.

Burmese and the Mon were responsible for the spilling of war all over the place.

> After 2,000 years of the Buddha's Religion had passed, Buddhism began to degenerate because of many reasons. ... ... A great war, frightening as it was, broke out in the Mon contries and Burma. Since then, the sovereigns of the two sides marched against each other, pillaged each other's cities, destroyed them, and killed a lot of people.[207]
>
> Then, many wars were waged in various countries. Because of their bad actions (a-kusala-kamma), men were faced with great tragedy in parting with loved ones.[208]

And the result of these wars was:

> Temples, monks' dwelling units, and people's houses were destroyed by enemies. Monks and laymen alike were homeless, without shelter, and full of sorrow and anguish. All had to flee. Buddha's words, that is, the Tipitaka, which had been kept in different places, were destroyed in fire. The rest of them were scattered and not cared for. Time after time, wars went on, and the Tipitaka gradually disappeared, and no more did it contain the 84,000 dhammakhandha (divisions of Buddha's teaching). Men in many a country were ignorant, avaricious, full of hatred, and full of delusion. They no longer had faith in the religion, saw the benefit of, and heeded Buddha's words. They did not help and respect learned monks because they were self-opinionated. They could not preserve the Dhamma and prevent it from sinking into oblivion.[209]

In dealing with the later history of Ayutthayâ, Phra Wimonlatham passed many damning strictures on the kings of

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207) Wimonlatham, op.cit.: 370
208) ibid.: 371
209) ibid.: 372

the Bân Phlû Luang dynasty, because they had failed to rule according to Buddhist principle. Three kings in particular were condemned outright. Phrachâo Sû'a (1703-9) is called Mahālona, "The Reprobate", because "he had committed a lot of sin, killed living creatures, and done little for the good cause".[210] Phrachâo Thâi Sa (1709-33) is disdainfully called Mahācora, "the Great Robber", for almost the same reason. But worst of all is King Ekkathat (Phra Thînang Suriyâmarin, 1758-67), who is described in this way.

> Having little intelligence, a perverted mind, no fear of sin, and neglecting kingly duty; he had no regard for anything good or bad. [As a result] At that time, the generals and ministers, the people of the capital, the people of villages, and the people of the towns, all adhered to the false doctrines, led a dishonest life, quarrelled amongst themselves, and were in distress.[211]

With regard to its chronological framework, the Saṅgīti/1789 is inconsistent. Reconstruction shows that it was written by two writers; one was perhaps a monk in the reign of Prâsâtthong, and the other was Phra Wimonlatham himself. The chronology of vV/1640 and that of Saṅgīti/1789 (up to the accession year of Prâsâtthong) agree with each other with the exception of the reign period of Râmésuan, as given by the text prefaced by Prince Damrong. This discrepancy can be explained away as one of the many scribal errors. The vV/1640 and the manuscript of the Saṅgītiyavamsa edited by Coedès give Râmésuan a six-year reign (1388-93) whereas

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210) Coedès, "Une recension palie": 25; Wimonlatham, op.cit.: 395
211) Coedès, op.cit.: 27; Wimonlatham, op.cit.: 402

Prince Damrong's copy gives the same king a nine-year reign (1388-96). The mistake in the latter must have occurred during the process of recopying. The copyist could easily mistake the Pali word for six (๖) in a corrupt manuscript for nine (๙).[212)]

As the Saṅgīti/1789 gives the animal designation to certain kings' accession date, sometimes with the Buddhist Era, we can reconstruct the whole chronology quite accurately. Since the chronology of vV/1640 and that of Saṅgīti/1789 correspond with one another, it is possible to calculate the reign period of each king by using the traditional Tai-Chinese method of counting the animal years. The basic principle of this method is to include all animal years a reign covers. Supposing a king came to the throne in 1664, a "Dragon Year", and died in 1667, a "Goat Year", he would be said to have ruled for four years, because his reign is considered to have covered four animal years: (1) 1664, "Dragon Year", (2) 1665, "Snake Year", (3) 1666, "Horse Year", and (4) 1667, "Goat Year". In the same instance, modern arithmetic will give a three-year reign to this king. In between the reigns of Râmâthibọdî I and Prâsâtthọng, we have a skeletal chronology based on the seven animal years given in Saṅgīti/1789.[213)] With the stated reign periods in vV/1640 and Saṅgīti/1789, one can fill in the skeletal chronology by using traditional arithmetic.[214)] However,

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212) Coedès, op.cit.: 8; Wimonlatham, op.cit.: 375

213) Coedès, op.cit.: 31

214) See Appendix III (A&B)

this is not the case with the chronology between the reigns of Prâsâtthong and Ekkathat.

The confusing sequence of reigns between Prâsâtthong and Nârâi suggests that the compiler of the addendum of the original Saṅgītiyavamsa and vV/1640 was writing from oral traditions. In actual fact Athitsurawong ruled briefly in 1629 and was succeeded by Prâsâtthong, who was also known by the contemporary title of Phra Sîthammarâchâ.[215] The compiler in the early Bangkok period became confused by Prâsâtthong's true title, and mixed it up with that of Intharâchâ, his predecessor, who was known commonly as Phra-čhâo Songtham, the "Great King" in European sources. As a result Sîthammarâchâ is said to have been succeeded by Diyara, a king unknown in other sources, European or indigenous. If Prâsâtthong (Sîthammarâchâ) had been mistaken for Phračhâo Songtham, then Diyara must have represented a son of Songtham. This mysterious "Diyara" is followed in the reign sequence by Prâsâtthong (Suvaṇṇapāsāda), so he could be Athitsurawong (Athittayawong in the detailed phongsâwadân). The only possibility is that "Diyara" is a corrupt Pali name. I propose amending it and restoring it to the more usual form (Ā)di(t)yarā(ja) in Pali and Athittayarât in Siamese.

In the addendum of the Saṅgītiyavamsa, four animal designations are given to the reigns of Sudhamarāja (Suthammarâchâ, Sîthammarâchâ, i.e. Prâsâtthong), a Horse Year; Nârâi, B.E. 2207, a Dragon Year; Borommakôt, B.E. 2275, a

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215) W.H. Mundie, Van Vliet's Historical Account..: 136

Rat Year; and Uthumphǫn, B.E. 2301, a Tiger Year. The most interesting fact I found in trying to reconstruct the chronology of the addendum of Saṅgīti/1789 is that one cannot fill in the skeletal chronology by using traditional arithmetic. In Appendix III (C), I juxtapose the reconstructed chronology by traditional arithmetic in the left column and that by modern arithmetic in the right column. Nârâi is said to have come to the throne in B.E. 2207 (Dragon Year = A.D. 1664) and ruled for 24 years. Phra Phetrâchâ is said to have ruled for ten years; Phrachâo Sû'a, seven years; Thâi Sa, 26 years. If constructed by traditional arithmetic, the reign of Thâi Sa should end in 1727. But the Saṅgīti/1789 also states that Bǫrommakôt came to the throne in 1731 (B.E. 2275, Rat Year). This represents a discrepancy of 1731-1727 = 4 years. On the other hand, if calculated by using modern arithmetic, the sum total of the whole period between Nârâi and Thâi Sa will be (24+10+7+26) 67 years. Add 67 to A.D. 1664 and one arrives at A.D. 1731 which is the date of Bǫrommakôt's accession to the throne.[216] It is not clear how this calculation came about, and whether it was Phra Wimonlatham himself who chose to experiment with modern arithmetic in this religious chronicle, because it was not used in Siam until the reign of Chulâlongkǫn. Otherwise, the Siamese version must have been written by someone who had been in close contact with Europeans, and the text was not tampered with by Phra Wimonlatham when it was presented in the Pali version.

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216) Coedès, op.cit.: 25; See also the reconstructed chronology of Saṅgīti/1789 in Appendix III (C)

As already mentioned, the Saṅgītiyavaṁsa was written to commemorate the Buddhist Council of 1788, and to provide Râmâ I and the Second King with some legitimacy. In contrast to the few pages devoted to the reign of Phrachâo Tâk, the king who brought Siam back on her feet against the Burmese, the whole Chapter VIII is devoted to panegyrizing the Chakkrî brothers, especially in their efforts to purify the saṅgha. But most important of all, the Saṅgīti/1789, in emulation of the Jinakālamālī, has accentuated a Buddhist tradition amongst the Thai with regard to the number of the Buddhist Councils. According to Saṅgīti/1789, the Buddhist Council sponsored by Râmâ I was the ninth. Of the other eight Councils, the first three were held in India, the next four in Ceylon, and the eighth in Chiang Mai. These Councils are listed as follows:-

The First Buddhist Council was convened only 21 days after Buddha's parinibbāna.

The Second Buddhist Council was sponsored by King Kālaśoka in B.E. 100.

The Third Buddhist Council was sponsored by King Aśoka the Great in B.E. 218. It is believed by South-East Asians that on this occasion, missions were sent to propagate the Buddhist Religion outside India.

The Fourth Buddhist Council was convened in Ceylon under the patronage of King Dutthagāminī in B.E. 376

The Fifth Buddhist Council was also convened in Ceylon in B.E. 433 during the reign of King Vattagāminī.

The Sixth Buddhist Council was sponsored by King

Mahānāma in B.E. 956. The Buddhist Scriptures were written in Pali for the first time.

The Seventh Buddhist Council was convened in B.E. 1587, and sponsored by King Parakkamabāhu of Ceylon.

The Eighth Buddhist Council was sponsored by King Tilôkkarât of Chiang Mai in A.D. 1483.

The Ninth Buddhist Council was convened in Bangkok in A.D. 1788, and was sponsored by Râmâ I. It is the main subject of Chapter VIII of the Saṅgītiyavaṃsa.

There is, however, an element of rivalry between the Siamese and Burmese saṅghas. In this matter the Burmese have adopted a different tradition of their own. They list these Councils only:-

The First Great Buddhist Council was organized by Mahāthera Kassapa and sponsored by King Ajātasattu of Rājagaha soon after the Buddha's parinibbāna.

The Second Great Buddhist Council was convened at Vaisālī in B.E. 433 (A.D. 443)

The Third Great Buddhist Council was convened at Pataliputra in B.E. 218 under the sponsorship of King Aśoka.

The Fourth Great Buddhist Council was convened in Ceylon in B.E. 376 (B.C. 13) during the reign of King Dutthagāminī.

The Fifth Great Buddhist Council was convened in Mandalay, Burma's capital, by King Mindon in 1871.

The Sixth Great Buddhist Council was convened in Burma in 1956.[217]

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217) La Fuente, "Le Sixième Grand Concile Bouddhique", in Présence du Buddhism, FA Publication, 16, No. 153-157 (1959): 666-71

The Chakkraphatdiphong (Chât) Recension

The Chât Recension of the Chronicle of Ayutthayâ comprises 17 fascicles of palm-leaves. Presented by a son of Phra Chakkraphatdiphong (Chât) to the Wachirayân National Library in 1908, it has no preamble. It covers events from the founding of Ayutthayâ in 1351 to C.S. 1089 (A.D. 1727) in the reign of Thâi Sa. It has received the least attention from Thai historians amongst the detailed phongsâwadân.

The content of Chât up to the beginning of Nârâi's reign is virtually the same as the other detailed phongsâwadân, i.e. Phan/1795, Wannarat/1805?, and BM/1808. There is little doubt that Chât was compiled and revised during the early Bangkok period, though some scholars believe that it was compiled during Bǫrommakôt's reign, because it ends with his father, Thâi Sa.[218] This uncritical assessment is quite illogical. First, C.S.1136 Fragment, which is believed to have been written in either the reign of Thâi Sa or that of Bǫrommakôt, proves to have adopted the chronology of LP/1680. It seems unlikely that Chât with its wrong chronology up to Nârâi's reign could have been written by Bǫrommakôt's historians. Secondly, as Prince Damrong indicated, the chronological aberrations occur first in the C.S.1145 Fragment.[219] Of all the detailed chronicles, Chât's language is the least polished. Its "time elements" (Friday/11th of the waxing moon/8th month) are not used very consistently. It is full of lacunae. There is every

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218) Nâttawiphâ, op.cit.: 231

219) Damrong, "Introduction", PP/4, vol. 3,: 136-8

possibility that C.S. 1145 Fragment may have formed part of Chât. Thirdly, as will be demonstrated in the case of BM/1808, the detailed phongsâwadân compiled during the first Bangkok reign are the result of "scissors and paste" treatment. Thus, to say that Chât was written in Bǫrommakôt's time is misleading, though I would not disagree that from the reign of Nârâi to that of Thâi Sa the compiler was copying from an Ayutthayan manuscript.

What must strike historians doing research on the history of late Ayutthayâ is the fact that Chât is the only phongsâwadân history that offers the correct chronology concerning Ną̂râi's reign and the Bân Phlû Luang dynasty. Assessing the historical value of Chât, Nidhi Aeusrivongse comments:-

> /Chât/ was probably written under the sponsorship of the Bân Phlû Luang dynasty. It is the only phongsâwadân history that renders events towards the end of Nârâi's reign quite accurately, whereas the other phongsâwadân recensions are at variance with the primary sources, for instance, Chât does not claim that Châofâ Aphaiyathot was Nârâi's son; other recensions say he was. Chât gives the correct date of Nârâi's death; others are 6 years out. The chronology as given by Chât is accurate when tested against primary sources, except for the reign of Phrachâo Sû'a.[220]

Although Nidhi's assessment of Chât is fairly satisfactory, it should be pointed out that his perusal of Chât's chronology has failed to reveal that even the date of Phrachâo Sû'a's death is correct. Ostensibly, Chât gives

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220) Nidhi, Bangkok History..: 8

C.S. 1077 (A.D. 1715) as the year in which Phrachâo Sû'a died.[221] This date is undoubtedly incorrect. But Nidhi could have rejected this date by checking the internal evidence. Chât also states clearly that Phrachâo Sû'a came to the throne in C.S. 1065[222] and ruled for seven year.[223] According to traditional arithmetic, the last year of this king's reign should fall in C.S. 1065+7-1 = 1071 (A.D. 1709). As the last two digits of 1071 and 1077 sound very similar in spoken Siamese, the compiler (or a reader) could have said 71 (chet-sip-et) and the scribe could have heard 77 (chet-sip-chet). Once the scribe had written down 1077, an animal designation had to be attached to it. In this case, C.S. 1077 would correspond to a Goat Year, so the scribe wrote down "C.S. 1077, Goat Year, seventh of the decade" instead of "C.S. 1071, Bull Year, first of the decade", which is correct.[224]

The Phanchanthanumât (Cherm) Recension

Consisting of 22 samut-thai, the Phanchanthanumât (Cherm) Recension is a detailed chronicle of Ayutthayâ. It was published as PP/64. It covers the period between the founding of Ayutthayâ and the fall of Ayutthayâ in 1767. It also has a preamble stating that:-

> May it be of good omen. C.S. 1157, Hare Year, Seventh of the Decade. His Majesty, the Great Upholder of Buddhist Law, King of Kings, Ruler of the Celestial

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221) Fine Art Dept., Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân: 941
222) ibid.: 939
223) ibid.: 941
224) ibid.

> City of Thawârâwadî Sî Ayutthayâ, sitting upon the throne of Dusit the Great Hall, ordered the revision of the phrarâtchaphongsâwadân.[225]

The Phančhanthanumât (hereafter cited Phan/1795) is the most problematic of all the detailed phongsâwadân as it represents two stages of revision. The word used in the preamble is chamra, "to revise an old text". This means that Phan/1795 is based on an early version of the chronicle of Ayutthayâ, possibly Chât or C.S.1145 Fragment. It is evident that a great deal of improvement had been made in the matter of language used and uniformity of "time elements". In Chât the "time elements" are usually arranged in the following order: day of the week/lunar date/month, which is the correct way of translating the old "time elements" represented in figures. But there are also instances of them being arranged in this order: day of the week/month/lunar date. The inconsistencies are to be found in the treatment of Mahâ Chakkraphat's reign, where the traditional figures are translated in both ways:

C.S. 892, ⌈3 $\frac{7}{}$ 4⌋7 = Tuesday, 4th month, 7th of the waxing moon.[226]

C.S. 894, ⌈1 $\frac{6}{}$ 2⌋7 = Sunday, 2nd month, 6th of the waxing moon.[227]

C.S. 899, ⌈1 $\frac{1}{}$ 5⌋7 = Sunday, 1st of the waxing moon, 5th month.[228]

C.S. 906, ⌈7 $\frac{1}{}$ 8⌋7 = Saturday, 1st of the waxing moon, 8th month.[229]

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225) ibid.: 1
226) ibid.: 536
227) ibid.: 538
228) ibid.: 542
229) ibid.: 565

The inconsistencies as found in the reign of Mahâ Chakkraphat suggest the possibility that when Chât was first compiled, the reign of this king was revised and re-written by a different hand. We learn from the second preamble of the British Museum Recension that in C.S. 1157 (A.D. 1795):-

> His Majesty,.. ordered that the phrarâtchaphongsâwadân should be revised (chamra), concerning events from the founding of Ayutthayâ by Râmâthibǫdî I, right through the next eleven kings ending with Phra Chaiya-râchâ, the executions of Khun Wǫrawongsâ and Mèh Sî Sudâčhan, the invasion of the Burmese and their withdrawal, to Phra Mahâ Chakkraphat's preparation for a punitive expedition against Cambodia.[230]

It must be emphasized that Phan/1795 underwent revision twice in 1795. In the first phase of this revising work, Râmâ I's historians carried the story up to C.S. 1060, Hare Year. This is not correct because C.S. 1060 was actually a Tiger Year. The editor of Phan/1795 suggests that "This is probably a Rat Year, C.S. 1070, at least, because the previous entry is C.S. 1069".[231] The entry for C.S. 1069, Tiger Year, is again dubious, because it was actually a Pig Year. It would fit in well with the internal evidence, if we believe that the animal designation is correct, and amend C.S. 1069 to C.S. 1060, Tiger Year. That being done, C.S. 1060, Hare Year, First of the Decade, must be amended to C.S. 1061, Tiger Year, First of the Decade. It is therefore, plausible to say that in the first stage of revision, Phan/1795 carries the history of Ayutthayâ up to C.S. 1061

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230) Fine Art Dept., Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sayâm: 51-2
231) Fine Art Dept., Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân (Phan/1795): 425fn.1

(A.D. 1699). For convenience's sake, I shall refer to this first phase of revision as Phan/1795 (I).

Phan/1795 (I) departs from the Chât's chronological framework beginning with the reign of King Nârâi. The chronology of Phan/1795 (I) is not correct, and the story from Nârâi's reign to C.S. 1061 in Phrachâo Sû'a's reign must have been written anew (tèng), not only revised (chamra). By way of chronological analysis, we may conclude that the compiler of Phan/1795 (I) was following the Culayud- tradition, which was also be the basis for Wannarat/1805?, Paramânuchit/1850, and R.A./1855. (See Appendix III (C))

At the end of Phan/1795 (I) there is a statement by the second compiler to the effect that:-

> Up to this point, the story concerning the reigns of Phra Phetrâchâ and Phrachâo Sû'a was done previously. His Majesty has now commissioned Châophrayâ Phiphit-phicahai to write about the reigns of Phra Nârâi, Phra Phetrâchâ, Phrachâo Sû'a, Phra Bǫrommakôt and Phra Thînang Suriyâmarin. This is to be done chronologically.[232]

The Siames sentence "Tham wai tèh kǫn" (was done previously) is quite vague in actual meaning. Some historians believe that this means that Phan/1795 (I) was compiled under the sponsorship of Bǫrommakôt and revised during the Thonburî period.[233] With regard to Nârâi's reign in Phan/1795 (I), the compiler states that "Two books are missing concerning events in the C.S. 1030s".[234] The events during the C.S. 1030s are not related in Chât

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232) ibid.: 425
233) Busakorn, "Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân": 50
234) Phan/1795: 409

either. After an interval of 21 years in the middle of Nârâi's reign, the compiler of Chât takes up the story again in C.S. 1045 (A.D. 1683), whereas the compiler of Phan/1795 (I) takes up the story again in C.S. 1044 (A.D. 1682), and says Nârâi died in that year.

On the other hand, "done previously", in the words of Châophrayâ Phiphitphichai, can mean the revision done for Phan/1795 (I), and another compilation was needed to bring the story up to the fall of Ayutthayâ in 1767. It appears that Phan/1795 (I), like Chât, was revised in Râmâ I's reign. This interpretation is based on the evidence that the chronology of Phan/1795 (I) is wrong with regard to the reigns of Phra Phetrâchâ and Phrachâo Sû'a; had it been recopied from an Ayutthayan text, it would have given an accurate account. Furthermore, the often retrospective applications of the Bangkok term "Krungthep Mahâ Nakhǫn Bǫwǫn Thawârâwadî Sî Ayutthayâ" in the final part of Phan/1795 (I) are clear evidence of interpolations.[235]

Châophrayâ Phiphitphichai's treatment of the Bân Phlû Luang kings differs greatly from Phan/1795 (I). I shall hereafter refer to his work as Phan/1795 (II). Phan/1795 (II) begins in C.S. 1044, the last year of King Nârâi, and ends with the fall of Ayutthayâ in C.S. 1129. Its chronology is all wrong except for the last two reigns of Uthumphǫn and Suriyâmarin.[236] Why Châophrayâ Phiphitphichai saw the need to rewrite the history of the last

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235) For example, ibid.: 400,401, 404, etc. The normal Ayutthayâ term would be "Phra Nakhǫn Sî Ayutthayâ", ibid.: 416

236) See Appendix III (C)

year of Nârâi's reign will be discussed in connection with Châ̆t, Wannarat/1805?, and Phan/1795 (I) later.

Somdet Phra Wannarat of Wat Phra Chétuphon and the Saṅgha Views of the History of Ayutthatâ

In 1863 the American missionary Dan Beach Bradley published a version of the detailed chronicle of Ayutthayâ together with an abridged chronicle known to have been written by Somdet Kromma Phra Paramânuchitchinôrot in 1850. The detailed chronicle was published in two volumes, and has come to be known as the Bradley Recension or the Two-Volume Edition. Bradley did not publish the preamble to the detailed chronicle, and for a long time, it was understood that it also was written by Kromma Phra Paramânuchitchinôrot.[237] But it is clear from the preamble that Somdet Phra Wannarat was chiefly responsible for this revision of a previous text, probably, Phan/1795. The preamble is as follows:-

> May it be of good omen. C.S. 1157 (1795), Hare Year. His Majesty, ... ordered the revision (chamra) of the phrarâtchaphongsâwadân. Later on, Somdet Phra Wannarat of Wat Phra Chétuphon, the royal preceptor, and Phrachâo Lûk Ther named Somdet Phra Paramanuchit Chinôrot Sî Sukhot Khattiyawong, his disciple, revised and cross-checked (chamra-sop) it from the beginning to the end, and compiled it further until the Bangkok period.[238]

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237) Wannarat, Somdet Phra, Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ, Khlang Witthayâ edition, 1972: "Introduction" of the Fine Art Dept., p. 1; Hereafter cited Wannarat/1805?. This chronicle has partially been translated into English by Samuel J. Smith (History of Siam, Bangkok: S.J. Smith's Office) since 1880.

238) ibid.: 4-5

The last entry of this detailed chronicle is C.S. 1154 (A.D. 1792). But this Wannarat Recension could have been revised any time between C.S. 1157 and C.S. 1169, the date of the compilation of the British Museum Recension. There is a possibility that in 1795, when Phan/1795 was finally finished by Châophrayâ Phiphitphichai, Râmâ I asked Somdet Phra Wannarat to re-examine it and carry the story on to C.S. 1154 (A.D. 1792). In revising it Somdet Phra Wannarat appears to have incorporated the history of Phra-čhâo Tâk's reign written by Phra Thamthirârâtmahâmunî (Chŭn) of Wat Hong.[239] The preamble of Wannarat/1805? suggests that its compiler was assisted by his pupil, Prince Paramânuchit. The Prince was born in December 1790.[240] By the end of 1795, Prince Paramânuchit would have been only five years old, and it would be impossible for a child of that age to help write a long chronicle. The Prince became a novice in 1802 and studied the art of letters with Somdet Phra Wannarat. If the young novice had any hand in it, it must have been between 1802 and 1808, because by that time he would have been aged between 13 and 17, and his preceptor, who was born in 1734,[241] would have been between 68 and 73. The young Prince Paramânuchit's interest in the phongsâwadân is manifest, because during his novitiate he requested his teacher to compose two more Pali chronicles: the Mahāyuddha-

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239) Trî Amâttayakun, op.cit.: 34

240) Natthawut Sutthisongkhrâm, Krom Somdet Phra Paramânuchit, "Biography of Prince-Monk Paramânuchit", Bangkok: Watthanâphânit, 1962: 5

241) ibid.: 23

kāravamsa (Mon Chronicle) and the Culayuddhakāravamsa (Siamese Chronicle). It is conceivable that in all cases Paramânuchit's contribution was in a minor scribal rôle. In all likelihood, I would place the Wannarat Recension around A.D. 1805.

There are three aspects of Somdet Phra Wannarat's History which deserve some discussion. First, the chronology of the Bân Phlû Luang period, as devised by Châophrayâ Phiphitphichai in Phan/1795 (II), is again revised in favour of the Culayuddhakāravamsa tradition. Events in the C.S. 1030's were compiled to fill in the reign of King Nârâi, although these represent anachronistic interpolations. A distorted chronology is inevitable because of the conviction that Nârâi died in A.D. 1682. Somdet Phra Wannarat had to reconstruct new dates from certain animal designations so that they would fit in with the contrived chronological framework. For example, it is said that the Greek adventurer Constantine Phaulkon came to Ayutthayâ in C.S. 1019 (A.D. 1657), Cock Year.[242] This is obviously wrong. If we assume that the animal year is correct and add to it two twelve-year cycles, it would fall in C.S. 1019+24 = 1043 = A.D. 1681. Contemporary accounts lend credence to this date.[243] It was common knowledge that Phaulkon arrived

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242) Wannarat/1805?: 413.

243) The scribe who accompanied the Iranian embassy to Ayutthayâ in 1685 wrote that Constantine Phaulkon had been chief minister for three or four years. See John O'Kane, (tr.), The Ship of Sulaiman: 103
Cf. E.W. Hutchinson, 1688 Revolution in Siam: The Mémoire of Father de Bèze, s.j., Hong Kong University Press, 1968: xi

and became Siam's prime minister many years before Nârâi's death. Somdet Phra Wannarat could not place this date in his chronological scheme, as it would be a year before Nârâi's death.

Secondly, more than any previous recension of the post-Ayutthayan phongsâwadân, the Wannarat represented a break-away from traditional phongsâwadân historiography where historians "reported what actually had happened". In the early Bangkok period, the constant wars with Burma and the cultural reconstruction initiated by Râmâ I had created an atmosphere in which edification was becoming the over-riding principle in the writing of the phongsâwadân, and "facts" alone were no longer sought. Influenced by the Chinese historical novels, Sâmkok and Saihan, the new phongsâwadân adopted a new style of narrative, which brought the historical work closer to the literature of the day. Some passages and some ideas were "loaned" from the Romance of the Three Kingdoms. For instance, an interpolation in the reign of Râmésuan has the besieged king of Chiang Mai stand coolly waving his feathered fan on the walls of the city in order to trick Râmésuan's armies.[244] This was obviously taken from an episode in Sâmkok where the greatest Chinese strategist, Khong Beng, was beleaguered by the enemies, but waged psychological warfare against the opposing troops by coolly blowing his flute on the top of the city-walls.[245] In another instance, Somdet Phra Wannarat

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244) Wannarat/1805?: 6

245) Sâmkok, vol. 4, published for the funeral of Somdet Phra Pitutchâ Châo Sukhumârasî, 1928: 1678-1680
Cf. Nidhi, Bangkok History: 44

describes how King Nârâi is supposed to have wanted to appoint Pân as Châophrayâ Kôsâ in place of his deceased elder brother, Lek, and as commander-in-chief of the expeditionary forces to attack Chiang Mai. Pân asked to prove his worth first. Carrying the royal sword, he ordered the assembling of troops and commanded his soldiers in this war game to camp with a specific instruction that in making the fences everyone must pierce the sharp end of the bamboo sticks into the ground. Everyone obeyed Châophrayâ Kôsâ (Pân)'s order. The following day an officer came to inspect. Finding the bamboo sticks planted wrongly into the ground, he ordered the soldiers to do it in the correct way and thus disobeyed the commander-in-chief. Knowing of this disobedience, the Châophrayâ had the officer executed, for in the actual battle the soldiers must not question the instructions of their commander-in-chief.[246] What Somdet Phra Wannarat implied in these examples is that in time of war one must not lose one's morale, and a strong-willed general is the key to military success.

Thirdly, Somdet Phra Wannarat, previously compiler of the Saṅgītiyavamsa in 1789, represented the voice of the saṅgha at the time. An energetic man and a highly politicized monk, the abbot of Wat Phra Chétuphon was a strong supporter of Râmâ I. In revising Phan/1795, he applied the same kind of Buddhist principle of "praise and blame" in his state chronicle as in the Saṅgītiyavamsa. In order to highlight Râmâ I's standing as a great Buddhist king,

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246) Wannarat/1805?: 450-1

Somdet Phra Wannarat saw the need to condemn most of the Bân Phlû Luang kings as unjust leaders, who had abandoned the Buddhist way of life. In one instance he describes their enemy, Alaungpaya, who led an invasion of Ayutthayâ in 1767, as "the supreme monarch endowed with prowess,... who would quell the enemies, subdue the kalI yuk, "time of troubles", promote the Religion, and care for all the subjects, no matter who they were." 247)

It can be said that the degree of "blame" directed at the Bân Phlû Luang kings increased with every stage of the revision of the phrarâtchaphongsâwadân. Even Chât, which is quite lenient with the Bân Phlû Luang dynasty, could not help condemning Phra Phetrâchâ and Phrachâo Sû'a for their rebelliousness towards the end of Nârâi's reign.[248] But this is likely to be a late interpolation, because the latter part of Chât is very favourable to the Bân Phlû Luang kings. In its treatment of Phra Phetrâchâ's reign, Chât praises this king highly, for example, it is said that:-

> Phrayâ Phetrâchâ said, "I shall invite the corpse of the late king /Nârâi/ to the royal barge. All the noblemen should act according to my instruction." The nobility said, "It is an appropriate moment for you to ascend the throne." Phrayâ Phetrâchâ replied, I shall look after the affairs of the kingdom until we can find a meritious man." ... Phrayâ Phetrâchâ embarked on the royal barge, Sîsakkarât, which followed the Suphannahong, in which the royal corpse was kept. At about 8 o'clock in the evening the

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247) ibid.: 640

248) Fine Art Dept., Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ (Chât): 934

> procession arrived at Bân Taphung. A miracle took place. The Buddha's relics flew past the barge that carried the royal corpse, and flew in encirclement of the Sîsakkarât.[249]

The compiler of Phan/1795 (I) was perhaps working to an earlier document, which is quite flattering to Phra Phetrâchâ, founder of the Bân Phlû Luang dynasty. In an entry for C.S. 1044, it is written that,

> At the moment when the king [Nârâi] was taken seriously ill, he said Phra Phetrâchâ was a high-ranking official, so he entrusted him with the administration of the kingdom.[250]

Both the compilers of Chât and Phan/1795 (I) apparently tried to give Phra Phetrâchâ a kind of legitimacy, and in both cases, the word used to describe the coronation of this controversial king is prâpdâphisek, or "accession to the throne by right of conquest". Phan/1795 (II) and Wannarat use the less prestigious term râchâphisek to describe the way in which he came to the throne.[251]

Chât and Phan/1795 (I) say simply that Phra Phetrâchâ promoted his old wife to the rank of Phra Akkhamahésî, "Chief Queen" of the Right, and a daughter of King Nârâi to the rank of Phra Akkhamahésî of the Left.[252] Phan/1795 (II) and Wannarat deliberately try to defame the king. It is reported that Phra Phetrâchâ intended to have intercourse

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249) ibid.: 936

250) ibid.: 934

251) ibid.(Chât): 937; Phan/1795 (I): 410; Phan/1795 (II): 428; Wannarat/1805?: 378

252) Chât: 937; Phan/1795 (I): 410

with Nârai's daughter but she utterly resisted. The king therefore asked for the help of a magician to induce her to sleep with him.[253] Somdet Phra Wannarat's version is the more sensational of the two.

The greater part of Wannarat/1805? is devoted to describing how some of the Bân Phlû Luang kings committed grave sins in quite appalling fashion. Like the Saṅgiti/1789, Wannarat condemns the bad behaviour of Phrachâo Sû'a and Thâi Sa. The condemnation of Phrachâo Sû'a does not exist in Chât nor, strangely enough, in Phan/1795 (II), but it is highly dramatized in Phan/1795 (I) and Wannarat. Probably Phrayâ Phiphitphichai removed this false charge.[254] To demonstrate this point, I shall translate a passage from the latter:-

> At that time the King had a base character; his heart was full of filth and void of honesty and goodness. He departed from the kingly way. He lacked the sense of right and wrong, and his thought was the source of all sorts of perversion. ...
>
> The King was fond of sexual intercourse with girls who had barely reached puberty. If any young girl could bear the pains, he rewarded her with cloths and money. If any young girl could not bear the suffering, he would hit her because of his uncontrollable anger until she died.[255]

The myth of a "fierce and barbaric" Phrachâo Sû'a, or even his common name "Sû'a" (Tiger) must have originated

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253) Phan/1795 (II): 429; Wannarat/1805?: 378

254) It cannot be substantiated by contemporary French missionaries' accounts. Somdet Phra Wannarat must have brought it back into the text.

255) Wannarat/1805?: 575-6

from the fact that the king was born in a "Tiger Year".[256] Also, the charge against Phrachâo Sû'a is recognizably an extreme variation of the "lustful prince/king" theme of the Mahāvaṃsa, the chronicular bible of a monk. One can dismiss this charge as unfounded. And predictably, the same sort of charge, that had earlier been referred to by Somdet Phra Wannarat in Saṅgīti/1789, is similarly levelled against Phrachâo Thâi Sa, who is said to have abandoned the Buddhist precepts and killed animals just for pleasure.[257]

The British Museum Recension.

In 1958 a recension of the detailed phongsâwadân was discovered by Nâi Khachǫn Sukhaphânit in the British Museum Library. It had previously been presented to that library in 1948 by J.H. Hayes, a descendant of an English surgeon, Nelson Hayes, who worked for the Siamese government during Chulâlongkǫn's reign (1868-1910). Consisting of 30 samut-thai, it was perhaps copied from an original, which has since been lost, in the reign of Chulâlongkǫn.[258] It was first published by the Fine Arts Department in 1964.[259]

The British Museum Recension is the longest of all the Siamese detailed chronicles, covering the period from legendary times to C.S. 1146 (A.D. 1784). The pre-Ayutthayâ history was written in the tamnân tradition, and was ob-

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256) Wannarat/1805?: 584-5, says that Phrachâo Sû'a was born in C.S. 1024, "Tiger Year". This is confirmed by Chât, which says the king died in C.S. 1071, aged 49. Again, 49 must have been another scribal error; 48 must be correct.

257) Wannarat/1805?: 593

258) Khachǫn Sukhaphânit, "Khai Khû Phû Téng Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ" (Who Were the Compilers of the Chronicles of Ayutthayâ?), Khǫmûn Prawattisât: 221

259) Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sayâm, Kâo-Nâ edition, 1964

viously taken almost verbatim from the Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Nû'a, "History of Upper Siam", which was compiled by Phra Wichianprîchâ (Nọi), head of the Department of the Royal Academy of the Right, under the patronage of the Prince of the Front Palace (future Râmâ II) in 1807.[260]

According to its preamble, the British Museum Recension was revised and presented to Râmâ I on Thursday, 14th of the waxing moon, 2nd month, C.S. 1169.[261] This date falls in January 1808. It was also supervised by the Prince of the Front Palace. It may be surmised that following the death of the first Second King in 1806, it was Râmâ I, who considered it appropriate to entrust his heir-apparent with such scholarly work, which would enhance the new Second King's personal prestige. Perhaps for this political reason, BM/1808 offers virtually nothing new; although the pre-Ayutthayâ period was included, and this may have been indicative of a wider vision of the Siamese ruling class, we have to presume that it was associated with another work supervised by the Second King.

BM/1808 is a classic case of "scissors and paste" editing of earlier materials as one can see that:-

(1) The pre-Ayutthayâ period is a reproduction of the Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Nû'a.

(2) From the reign of Râmâthibọdî I to that of Sîsuthammarâchâ, the BM/1808 follows the narrative style of Chât. The reproduction of Chât is confirmed by the inconsistencies in the "time elements", which the compiler(s)

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260) Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Nû'a in PP/1: 7
261) BM/1808: 1

of BM/1808 did not bother to correct.

(3) From the reign of Nârâi to the end of the chronicle, BM/1808 is based on the Wannarat recension.

The Culayuddhakāravamsa.

According to Prince Damrong, this Pali chronicle, translated into Siamese by Phrayâ Pariyattithammathâdâ (Phè), was written by Somdet Phra Wannarat of Wat Phra Chétuphon.[262] It is on record that Somdet Phra Wannarat composed another Pali work, the Mahāyuddhakāravamsa, "History of the Greater Wars", at the request of his pupil, Prince-Monk Paramânuchit. If the Culayuddhakāravamsa, "History of the Lesser Wars", is the Mahayud's sequel, and was written at the same time, it could have been written at any date between 1802 and 1811, the period of Prince Paramânuchit's novitiate. Trî Amâttayakun, however, suggests that it could have been written by another scholar-monk, Phra Thamthirârât (Chŭn) of Wat Hong, who was Somdet Phra Wannarat's rival. In this connection, Trî cites several discrepancies between the Wannarat/1805? and the Culayud, and concludes that they could not possibly have been written by the same person.[263] This assumption is not tenable in view of the fact that Somdet Phra Wannarat had written the Saṅgīti/1789, which has a different chronology from that of the Wannarat/1805?.

As stated earlier in this Chapter, Culayud is based on another work called Chunlawong or Culavamsa (if the original happens to be a Pali text). The Culayud also deals with the legendary period prior to the founding of Ayutthayâ.

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262) See pp. 237-8 above.
263) Trî, op.cit.: 30-3

It is difficult to assess this Pali chronicle in great detail as the extant copy tells the story only up to the year A.D. 1449. The content of the extant copy indicates a mixture of Wannarat/1805? and Saṅgīti/1789. The Pali version is almost a verbatim translation from Wannarat, but in Culayud, Somdet Phra Wannarat adopted a new chronology for certain reigns. Probably, Culayud was composed in Pali, just after he had finished the revision of Wannarat, which is based on Phan/1795.

Despite the similarity of the Wannarat and Culayud with the latter, Somdet Phra Wannarat appears to have adhered to his original text, whatever it was, quite honestly. The detailed phongsâwadân all list 16 vassal states paying tribute to Râmâthibọdî I in 1350, Culayud gives 24 dependencies. The Culayud is the only Siamese source that says categorically that during Râmâthibọdî I's reign "the Cambodian King was not Ayutthayâ's vassal".[264] The king of Ayutthayâ had to send his son, Phra Râmésuan, to attack and bring Cambodia into the Siamese orbit. Other chronicles, save LP/1680, imply that Cambodia had long been Ayutthayâ's dependency, and thus Râmésuan's expedition was a punitive one. Culayud's reign-periods for C15th Bọrommatrailôk and his immediate successor differ greatly from Wannarat.[265] Culayud, now in conformity with Saṅgīti/1789, calls Bọrommatrailôk's successor "Intharâchâ", whereas LP/1680 and the detailed phongsâwadân call this king Bọrommarâchâ.

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264) Culayud: 31

265) See Appendix III (A)

Prince-Monk Paramânuchit's Abridged Chronicle and King Mongkut's Royal Autograph Recension.

The Abridged Chronicle was compiled by Prince-Monk Paramânuchit at Râmâ III's request in 1850.[266)] It was first published in 1863 by Dan B. Bradley, and since then it has been known in Siamese as the Sangkhep, "Abridged", to differentiate it from the detail chronicles. It has also been translated into English.[266*] It appears that in writing this short chronicle, Paramânuchit had attempted to summarize his spiritual teacher, Somdet Phra Wannarat's Pali Chronicle, the Culayud, and presented it in Siamese. The Abridged Chronicle covers the same period as the Culayud, beginning in pre-Ayutthayâ times and ending with the fall of Ayutthayâ. More importantly, Paramânuchit adopted the chronology of the Culayud throughout.

In around 1855 Krommaluang Wongsâthirâtsanit, a half-brother of King Mongkut and one of the leading Siamese intellectuals during his reign (1851-68), produced another detailed phongsâwadân. This last detailed chronicle was apparently prompted by the request of Sir John Bowring, Queen Victoria's envoy plenipotentiary, who came to Bangkok to negotiate a treaty with the Siamese government.[267)] Prince Wongsâ's work was annotated by Mongkut himself; thus it has been referred to as the Royal Autograph Recension.[268)] It is known that when Paramânuchit died in 1853, most of his works were transported to the Grand Palace. It is hardly sur-

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266) Prince Damrong, "Tamnân Nangsü..": 16

266* D.K. Wyatt, "The Abridged Royal Chronicle of Ayudhya of Prince Paramanuchitchinorot", JSS, 61, 1 (Jan. 1973): 25-50

267) See also p. 340 below

268) Damrong, op.cit.: 18-9

prising that Prince Wongsâ should have made use of Paramânuchit's materials, so that the chronology of RA/1855 corresponds entirely with that of the Culayud and the Abridged Chronicle.[269] Although RA/1855 returned to the usual format of the phongsâwadân excluding the legendary period, and followed the narrative style of Wannarat/1805?, there are some alterations concerning the use of certain expressions. Some of the kings' names in Wannarat were altered in line with the Culayud: Bọrommarâchâ III becomes "Intharâchâ", and Yọt Fâ, in the other detailed phongsâwadân, becomes "Kèw Fâ" in RA/1855.[270] In the matter of chronology one has to conclude that the Culayud, Paramânuchit/1850, and RA/1855 belong to the same tradition.

The phongsâwadân historiography, as described in the foregoing pages, has complexities that can puzzle even specialists on Thai history. Prince Damrong's editing of RA/1855 in 1914 has given credence, in the eyes of many, to this recension as the official history of Ayutthayan Siam. Systematic dissection of the various Pali as well as Siamese chronicles reveals that there were four chronicular traditions, religious as well as secular. It seems that court historians of the Ayutthayâ period were particular concerned about "facts". Only during the Thonburî-Bangkok period, with the revived Buddhist scholarship, and the impact of Chinese literature, were the phongsâwadân given a new literary dimension, that almost blurred the distinction between facts and made-up stories. One is faced also with interpolations

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269) See Appendix III (A)
270) See Appendix III (B)

and scribal errors intrinsic to any manuscript transmission. A historian must not trust his sources blindly, and a critical method has to be used to assess their value. In the phongsâwadân histories we can establish the fact that only the 2/k.125 Fragment, the LP/1680, and the C.S.1136 Fragment, all Ayutthayan chronicles, are really trustworthy. The underlying factor is that the Bangkok compilers were much more concerned than their Ayutthayan counterparts with legitimation issue and moral edification, and this propensity has given the post-Ayutthayan phongsâwadân their distinctive character.

PART TWO

The Impact of the West

Introduction

Chapter III: The "New Ayutthayâ" and the Passing of the "Traiphûm" World-View

Chapter IV: The Challenge of the New "Gurus" and the Genesis of "National" Historiography.

INTRODUCTION

In the previous Chapters I have discussed at some length the two dominant categories of Thai traditional historiography, namely, the religious tamnân and the dynastic chronicles, the phrarâtchaphongsâwadân. In analyzing them I placed a great deal of emphasis on the various factors -historical developments, and especially the impact of Burman/Mon, Khmer, and Sinhalese traditions- which had originally come to influence not only Thai society, but also the Thai sense of the past. Overriding these elements is the fact that over the centuries Buddhism remained the most important cultural unifying force, and spiritually, the shining hope in the Thai world. As a result, Buddhist literature had for a long time had a sustaining effect on Thai traditional historiography, given that Thai historians in the old days were either a by-product of Pali studies or scholar-monks themselves. Old habits die hard, and the tamnân and the phongsâwadân were still being written even in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, long after the first elements of the Siamese élite began to acquaint themselves with Western culture and technological know-how.

In Part Two of this thesis I shall describe when and how Western learning came to influence the traditional world-views of the Siamese élite in the mid-nineteenth century, and the subsequent decline of old-fashioned Buddhist scholarship. Siam stood out amongst the countries of South-East Asia, more or less, because she remained independent when all her neighbours, one after another, fell victims

to Western imperialism in the second half of the nineteenth century. But it was the challenge of the West that brought about many changes in Siam. It contributed directly to the decline in the rôle of Buddhist scholar-monks as the central figures in the intellectual world of Siam, and undeniably it brought into existence the first generation of Siam's modern intellectuals. Above all, the threat of Western colonialism spurred on the Siamese ruling class to incorporate Siam's dependencies and outlying provinces into the central administration -the result of which was nothing less than the actual birth of the Thai nation.

It is my intention to discuss in the following pages the evolution of Thai historiography of this period against the background of Western-inspired intellectualism. Surprisingly, not so much has been written about the intellectual impact of the West upon Siam and even less about the Siamese reaction from the native point of view.[1] The general impression most historians have tried to convey is that the willingness of the court of Siam to accommodate the Western powers was greater under Mongkut (1851-68) than

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1) Amongst a few works dealing with Siam in transition are Walter F. Vella, Siam Under Rama III, 1824-1851, New York: Monographs of the Association for Asian Studies, 1957; another of his works, The Impact of the West on Government in Thailand, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1955; William L. Cowan, "The Role of Prince Chuthamani in the Modernizing of Siam", JSS, 55, 1 (Jan. 1967): 41-59. Abbot Low Moffat, whose Mongkut, the King of Siam (Cornell University Press, 1961) is now considered quite superficial, follows the somewhat official line. Constance M. Wilson's State and Society during the Reign of Mongkut, 1851-1868: Thailand on the Eve of Modernization (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Cornell University 1970) is perhaps the most informative of all the works pertaining to Mongkut's reign, but again it suffers from over-emphasizing the official historiography.

under his predecessor, Râmâ III (1824-51). Although the early Bangkok period appears to be less problematic than the Ayutthayâ period, thanks to the different kinds of material available for consultation, it is by no means uncontroversial. Again, one has to bear in mind the difficulty of dealing with the incomplete Thai records, and the bias shown by those "civilized" Europeans and Americans who tended to judge everything Siamese by the standards of the West. Various questions arise when one compares Siamese to Western sources. To complicate the matter further, the nature of the Siamese sources requires that historians reading them exercise the utmost care and are prepared to look for information between the lines.

The first half of the nineteenth century A.D. witnessed parallel changes that occurred simultaneously in the fields of politics, administration, and literature. These changes which were sometimes innovative, represented a departure from the old Ayutthayâ model, notwithstanding claims of Bangkok being the "New Ayutthayâ". During the second Bangkok reign (1809-24) Siam enjoyed comparative peace, and by the end of that reign, Burmo-Siamese confrontation had effectively ceased to exist, thanks to Burma's entanglement with the British. Peace brought prosperity to Siam, and one can now talk of the emergence of a mercantile class, and the consolidation of the khunnâng (nobility) class in the capital. In our present context, the 1830s -with renewed contact with the West, the arrival of Protestant missionaries in greater numbers, and significantly the rise of the Bunnâk family- were the beginning of the new era of Siamese intellectual

history.

Chapter III will begin with a brief discussion of the indigenous sources concerning the first four Bangkok reigns. This is followed by a section on the Siamese literary scene in the 1809-1851 period, during which there was initially a last flowering of traditional Siamese literary activities, but which coincided arguably with the final decline of traditional literary forms, despite the towering figure of Prince-Monk Paramânuchit (1790-1853), one of the most talented traditional poets in the history of Thailand. In connection with this, I shall discuss the impact on the literary scene of the late 1830s of the discovery by Prince-Monk Mongkut of the Sukhôthai inscriptions. It will be pointed out that contact with the West was not an important factor in bringing about institutional changes in Siam in the early stages. Neither did the influence of the West extend to the writing of Siamese history. But the ideas of science and Christianity came directly into conflict with the Buddhist views of life and universe. In the old days, the Siamese had called Westerners the "mitchâthitthi" (those who hold false beliefs) because they were non-Buddhist.[2] The Bangkok Siamese also dismissed Christianity as nonsense. However, Siamese intellectuals were generally impressed by the missionaries' scientific knowledge and were prepared to learn from them. It was not long before the leading thinkers of the period became sceptical about the Buddhist exposition of the "Three Worlds" (Traiphûm), which was also the basic

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2) See, for example, an Ayutthayan law dated from 1663 in KTS: 663-4

ingredient of tamnân histories. The passing of the traditional world-view was not sudden, but one can see that the new idea of a geographical world had implicitly been widely accepted and encouraged even by the conservative Siamese court by the late 1830s. This change of mind is obvious in the anonymous work entitled Tamrap Thâo Sîčhulâlak, "Lady Sîčhulâlak's Treatise", commonly known as Rû'ang Khong Nâng Nopphamât, "Story of Nâng Nopphamât", and in the inscriptions of Wat Phra Chétuphon (Wat Phô) engraved in 1837-8, describing in poetic form the foreign peoples of the geographical world known to the Siamese.

The preoccupation of the Siamese intellectual élite with Western learning in the third reign apparently led to the decline of traditional scholarship. The last major historical work by a traditional scholar was written in 1850, by Prince-Monk Paramânuchit, who was invited by Râmâ III, as noted above, to produce an 'updated' version of the Chronicle of Ayutthayâ, and this appears to have been the only known new formal history of Siam in forty years.

The discovery of the Râmkhamhèng inscription of 1292? by Prince-Monk Mongkut, in 1833, seems to have generated some interest amongst the Siamese élite in ancient history. But it was not until 1855, four years after Mongkut had acceded to the throne, that a new attempt was made to revise the Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân. Interestingly, the revision was prompted by the request of Sir John Bowring, the British envoy, in 1855, and by Mongkut's own feeling that the Siamese chronicles were not very reliable. This was the first revision of phongsâwadân history by a how Westernized Siamese

scholar, Prince Krommaluang Wongsâ.

Chapter IV will be devoted to a discussion of some prominent intellectuals of the fifth-reign generation culminating in the person of Prince Damrong, widely acclaimed as the "Father of Thai History". Two better known scholars during the fifth reign were commoners of modest family background, Thianwan (1842-1915) and K.S.R. Kulâp (1834-1913). Of the two, Thianwan was of a more radical mind, whereas K.S.R. Kulâp was a well-respected historian of his time. Unfortunately, both were disgraced; Thianwan for his radical social and political views, and K.S.R. Kulâp for his transgression of the royal authority in the field of historical writing, and for his unusual way of popularizing Siamese history, which proved unacceptable to the court. Until recently, the works of Thianwan and K.S.R. Kulâp were unfairly suppressed in official historiography owing to the preponderant influence of the writings of Prince Damrong. In the past thirty years or so, our understanding of the fifth reign has been conditioned by the rosy picture painted by royalist historians and uncritical writers.[3] Modern researches have produced a rather less favourable view of the internal development of Siam during King Chulâlongkọn's reign. It would be appropriate for Western and Thai scholars to look at Thianwan and Kulâp more attentively than at present. I justify the sections on Thianwan and Kulâp on these grounds.

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3) See, for example, Chula Chakrabongse, Prince, Lords of Life, London, 1960; Salao Rékharuchi and Udom Pramuanwit, Phya Mahârât Chulâlongkọn, "Our Beloved King Chulâlongkọn", Bangkok: Odeon Store, 1961; Prachoom Chomchai, Chulalongkọn the Great, Tokyo, 1965; This is to name only a few.

Chapter III

The "New Ayutthayâ" and

The Passing of the "Traiphûm" World-View.

A Note on the Indigenous Sources

In dealing with the history of the early Bangkok period, historians are faced with the fundamental problem of interpreting the various Thai sources. The problem was first highlighted in 1869, when Châophrayâ Thiphâkɔrawong (Kham Bunnâk) began to write his Dynastic Chronicle of the Bangkok Period for King Chulâlongkɔn. He had previously given some thought to the writing of a history of the Bunnâk family of which he was a leading member. In collecting certain source materials, he told the king, his task "was very much hampered by those officials who claimed that government records had either been eaten up by white ants, were lost, or in a bad state".[1] King Chulâlongkɔn was then a minor of sixteen years of age, under the tutelage of the Somdet Châophrayâ Bɔrom Mahâ Sisuriyawong (Chuang Bunnâk), the Regent and actual ruler of Siam and, also Châophrayâ Thiphâ's half-brother. Under the circumstances, one can guess that the initiative for this literary undertaking came originally from the Bunnâk clan or the Châophrayâ himself. According to Chinese-derived tradition, it would have been appropriate then for a newly crowned king to sponsor the writing of a

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1) See the old Bânphanèk, "exordium", in Châophrayâ Thiphâ's Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Rattanakôsin Ratchakân Thî 1, "Dynastic Chronicle of the First Bangkok Reign", revised by Prince Damrong in 1901, Special cremation volume for the funeral of Prince Krommamün Anuwatčhâturon, 1935:5

new dynastic history. Only with the authorization in the name of the king could all obstacles raised by the interested parties be removed, and the Čhâophrayâ enabled to go through all the documents kept in the government departments and by members of the royal family.[2] In view of the fact that apart from the government records that still exist in the National Archives, Bangkok, there are only a few reliable contemporary accounts concerning the first three reigns of the Čhakkrî dynasty, and that contemporary European accounts of real value only start with John Crawfurd's mission in 1822, Čhâophrayâ Thiphâ's Dynastic Chronicle is a major source of information. As Prince Damrong often pointed out, Čhâophrayâ Thiphâ's work contains some inaccuracies with regard to dates. But we are fortunate that the Čhâophrayâ had a tendency to reproduce verbatim old documents which are no longer available to historians. Furthermore, he had been an active participant in the government from the beginning of the third reign right through to the end of the fourth reign, when he retired as Minister of Foreign Affairs because of bad health and failing eyesight.

There are some other primary sources on the Thai side that merit a mention here. They can be listed as follows: (1) the so-called Čhotmâihet Khwâm Songčham Krommaluang Narintharathéwî, "Mémoir of Princess Narin", which is believed to have been written by Princess Narin, a half-sister of Râmâ I;[3] (2) the royal letters of King Mongkut,

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2) ibid.: 5-6
3) Čhulâlongkọn, King, "Phrarâtcha Wičhân" (A Critical Comment) in Čhotmâihet Khwâm Songčham Krommaluang Narin-

of which a number have already been published together with his other numerous writing; (3) the various literary works of the first four reigns, including biographical poems in praise of the second reign by Râmâ III, and of the Prince of the Front Palace of the first reign by Princess Kamphut-chat, his daughter. There are some limitations peculiar to the use of these sources, and there is as yet no critical study of them. The basic problem of dating some of these documents has still to be satisfactorily solved. Until recently, no historian made a real effort to look at Thai history from the literary point of view. Nidhi Aeusrivongse's Watthanatham Kadumphî Kap Wannakam Ton Rattanakôsin, "The Bourgeois Culture and the Literary Works of the Early Bangkok Period", which came out in 1982,[4] is a major step towards a better understanding of the sociopolitical set-up of Siam in the first half of the nineteenth century, significantly from the Siamese point of view. But as the most clinical analysis of some of the Siamese literary works of the same period, one cannot failed to be impressed by Chit Phûmisak's Botbât Thâng Wannakhadî Khǫng Phra Mahâ Montrî, "Phra Mahâ Montrî's Contribution to Thai Literature",[5] one of the best literary critiques ever written by a modern Thai scholar.

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tharathéwî, "Mémoir of Princess Narin", 5th reprint, Cremation volume for the funeral of Nângsâo Riap Wisetkun, 1966: 49-58

4) Institute of Thai Studies, Thammasât University, 1982

5) in Thîpakǫn (pseud.), Bot Wikhǫh Wannakam Yuk Sakdinâ, "A Collection of Critical Studies of Thai Literature of the Sakdinâ Period", Bangkǫk: Sèngtawan, 1976: 1-86

The first half of the nineteenth century was a period in which internal changes took place as a result of the meteoric rise of the Bunnâk and a few other related families, and the attempt by the throne to check their advance. It is not totally unjustified to claim that the history of the early Bangkok period is the history of the Bunnâk clan as much as that of the Chakkrî dynasty. Prof. David K. Wyatt has appropriately termed the special relationship between the royal family and the noblemen "family politics".[6] It is an area in which far-reaching conclusions can be drawn from genealogies of such as the <u>râtchanikun</u>[7] ṇa Bângchâng, the Singhasénî, the Bunnâk, and others, on the one hand, and the <u>râtchasakunlawong</u>[8] on the other.

A few words ought to be said about European accounts and American missionaries' reports. Irrespective of the recorders' personal views and background, many European accounts, such as John Crawfurd's <u>Journal</u> and the <u>Burney Papers</u>,[9] are important primarily because they have proved to be accurate, and significantly, as shrewd observers, John Crawfurd and Henry Burney have contributed where the Siamese records are historiographically most suspect.

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6) D.K. Wyatt, "Family Politics in Nineteenth Century Thailand", JSEAH, 9, 1 (Mar. 1968): 208-28

7) = "those families related to the first queen of the Chakkrî dynasty"

8) = "those families related to the Chakkrî dynasty itself"

9) John Crawfurd, Journal of an Embassy to the Court of <u>Siam and Cochin China</u>, Oxford in Asia Historical Reprints, 1967.
Wachirayân National Library, <u>The Burney Papers</u>, Bangkok, 1910

This assessment of Crawfurd's Journal and the Burney Papers also applies to the majority of other European accounts of Siam, and especially the records of the Protestant missionaries, who were already in Siam between 1832 and 1851.

It is not intended that this tudy should go into much detail in areas that have already been well-explored such as economic history[10] and foreign relations.[11] I propose instead to re-examine a much neglected aspect of Thai history, that is, that is the evolution of Thai intellectualism following the renewed contact with the West. In using Thai materials, my approach will be as descriptive as the nature of the sources allows. Where the Thai sources are found to be at variance with Western contemporary sources, a greater weight, if justified, will be given the latter on account of the suspect nature of the Thai records, although every effort will be made to present Thai history from the Thai point of view.

I

The "New Ayutthayâ"

> "Oh, Splendid Ayutthayâ! Thou hast risen again. Here is the Lion Throne, and there beyond, the glittering spires are everywhere."
> Source: Nâi In's Nirât Narin[12]

Reminiscing about the change in the early Bangkok period, Prince-Monk Pawaret Wariyâlongkǫn (1809-92), the

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10) See, for example, Sarasin Viraphol, Tribut and Profit, Sino-Siamese Trade, 1652-1853, Harvard university Press, 1977

11) Neon Snidvongs, The Development of Siamese Relations with Britain and France in the Reign of Maha Mongkut, 1851-1868, Unpub. Ph.D. Thesis, London University, 1961

12) P.N. Pramuanmâk, (pseud.), Nirât Narin Lèh Nirât Plík Yǫi, Bangkok: Phrè Phitthayâ, 1970: 11

Supreme Patriarch in the fifth reign, summarized the whole process in these famous words:-

> In the first reign, the king's favourites were warriors; in the second reign, they were poets; in the third reign, they were builders of Buddhist monuments; and in the fourth reign, they were those who could speak and write the English language.13)

This quotation reflects the main themes of the activities that occupied the minds of the first four Chakkrî kings. The fall of Ayutthayâ in 1767, to the Burmese, was a bad shock for the Siamese, and their lamentations over so tragic a loss of the old capital can be found in the literature of the early Bangkok period. The foundation of Bangkok as the new capital by Râmâ I, in 1782, marked the beginning of a new era of Siamese history. It also represented a new phase in the expansion of Siamese influence in terms of Siam's relations with her tributary states, which was to culminate in the third reign (1824-51).

Internally, the first Bangkok reign was a period in which intense cultural activity took place. Notwithstanding a series of Burmese incursions, Râmâ I (1782-1809) was able to initiate a cultural restoration aiming theoretically at the creation of an ideal Buddhist kingdom. Like most of his ministers, Râmâ I was born in the reign of King Bǫrom-makôt (1733-56) during which time Siam had enjoyed a long period of political stability, and reached a zenith in

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13) Quoted in Prince Damrong's "Introduction" in Fine Arts Dept., Nirât London Lèh Chotmâihet Khǫng Mǫm Râchôthai, "Mǫm Râchôthai's Poetic Traveloque on His Visit to London and the Relevant Records of the Siamese Embassy to the Court of St. James in 1857", 10th reprint, Khlang Witthayâ edition, 1965

her power, while her neighbours were going through bad times. The memory of Bǫrommakôt's reign was something indelible in the minds of the Siamese ruling élite of the post-Ayutthayâ period. Beginning in 1779, three years before his deposition, Phračhâo Tâk ordered his Čhakkrî Minister (later Râmâ I) to head a commission whose goal was to restore rituals and ceremonies after the Bǫrommakôt model.[14] This policy was pursued rigorously by Râmâ I after he himself became king. As the post-Ayutthayan élite had fond memories of the "Old Ayutthayâ" of Bǫrommakôt's time, often referred to as khrang bân mū'ang dî, "time of the good country",[15] the foundation of Bangkok in 1782 was then seen as representing a new hope and destiny. The inspiration for a "New Ayutthayâ" was so great on the literary scene that Siamese poets began to break with tradition and extol the new capital as much as or even more than the "God-King".

The cultural restoration was a long-drawn-out process lasting nearly half a century before it reached its climax in the 1830s. The degree of self-esteem, and the tendency towards conservatism exhibited by the Siamese of the early nineteenth century were partially caused by the virtual isolation of Siam from the Western world in the aftermath of the 1688 Revolution, which had resulted in the end of the Greek Minister Phaulkon episode, and the expulsion of the then French garrisons in the country. By the beginning of the second reign in 1809, 120 years later, the Siamese

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14) Fine Arts Dept., Latthi Thamniam Tângtâng, "The Various Customs and Practices in Siam", Khland Witthayâ, 1964, vol. I, part 15: 1

15) SS, 12,: 110

ruling classes had fully regained their self-confidence, and they withstood the last Burmese invasions in 1810 without much apprehension. Arts and literature continued to flourish in the first three reigns, though there were changes in the field of literature which became characteristic of the early Bangkok period.

In the second reign, with newly found prosperity and the growth of Bangkok, Nâi Narinthibet (In), was able to express his admiration for the completion of the building of Bangkok in his famous poem, Nirât Narin, which made the Siamese exude a sense of relief and satisfaction.

Râmâ II was himself a great poet, and his court boasted the greatest number of Siamese poets laureate, including Nâi Narinthibet (In). But, again in the second reign, the great warriors, who had experienced war against the Burmese, began to pass away. The remnants of the old Ayutthayâ finally gave way to a new generation of the Siamese élite, most of whom had spent the best part of their lives not in the battlefields, but in the comforts of thriving Bangkok. The China trade reached its peak towards the end of the second reign, and brought wealth to some influential noblemen's families. With the new wealth, the upper and middle classes acquired a new literary taste. In the meanwhile, closer economic links with China, and a greater degree of assimilation of the Chinese into the čhâonâi (princely) and khunnâng classes was responsible for the partial Sinicization of Siamese arts and culture.[16]

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16) Cf. D.K. Wyatt, The Politics of Reform in Thailand: Education in the Reign of King Chulalongkorn, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969: 24-5 fn.

II

The Literary Scene in Perspective.

What can best be termed literary works in old Siam existed only in verse, for prose was only used in works of a serious nature such as historical writing, royal decrees, and proclamations. Early Siamese literature was highly ritualistic and considered an aspect of the "God-King" cult. Siamese classics were as a rule written in the so-called lilit, using a combination of râi and khlông metres, and the kham-luang, "great poem", using a combination of all the Indian-derived versifications, râi, khlông, chan, and kâp. The composition of these two literary genres requires a court poet to have a good command of Pali and Sanskrit, and a good knowledge of the myriad forms of poetical metres. Naturally, not many people could understand the Siamese classics, and they were to all intents and purposes for the scholarly upperclass people to read. There was also religious literature, which was written in a mixture of Pali and Siamese in the simplest form of râi. This type of literature was easily understood and very popular, because its main themes came from the Nipāta-Jātakas, or "Buddha's Life Stories". Reading it, the Siamese believed, would replenish their store of merit.

As for the lower-class people, the basic form of their literary activities is little known. It appears that, at least in late Ayutthayâ, klɔn phleng, a simple rhyming scheme, was most popular with the population at large. Klɔn phleng, "poetic song", and its kindred variants, séphâ, "love and romance", phleng yâo, "love poem", and klɔn bot laknɔn,

"dramatic poem", were perhaps originally associated with the popular culture. The adaptation of the Java-derived love story, Dâlang, as the klɔn bot lakhɔn by one of King Bɔrommakôt's daughters suggests that the klɔn phleng had been upgraded and become a form of court literature as opposed to the more formal drama such as the ritualized mask-dance khôn, which restricted the performers to the great Indian epic, the Ramayana. It had become a tradition, probably since Bɔrommakôt's time, that only the king could maintain the lakhɔn nai, "Inside the Court Drama", performed exclusively by ladies of the palace, and that the lakhɔn nɔk, "Outside the Court Drama", performed only by men, was owned by other people. The klɔn bot lakhɔn, written for both kinds of theatrical performances, differed greatly in the matter of stories chosen.

During the early Bangkok period, Siamese literature was varied, and over the decades there were some new developments brought about by the personality of each king. I have discussed how, under Râmâ I, Siamese literature was used as a moral stimulus and a means of restoring self-confidence following the fall of Ayutthayâ in 1767. The translation of foreign literature, which went back to Ayutthayâ times, was given new impetus.[17] The close contact with China in the first half of the nineteenth century was responsible for a greater degree of acceptance of Chinese culture.

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17) King Nârâi (1656-88) is reported to have been very keen on the French, Chinese, and Japanese histories, and liked listening to them read by his attendants. Nicolas Gervaise, op.cit.: 117

Before the rapprochement with the West, the Siamese ruling class looked to China for inspiration. It is said that the tale brought back by Siamese envoys of the beautiful Chinese gardens of Peking excited Râmâ II so much that he ordered Krommamün Chet (future Râmâ III) to be in charge of the construction of Chinese-styled pavilions and a garden, on the Chinese model, inside the Grand Palace.[18] The influence of Chinese literary traditions had begun to make itself felt in the first Bangkok reign, especially with the translations of Sâmkok, "Romance of the Three Kingdoms", and Saihan, a Chinese history. The Bunnâk were great patrons of the translations of Chinese historical novels in the fourth and fifth reigns. Somdet Châophrayâ Bǫrom Mahâ Sîsuriyawong (Chuang) and Châophrayâ Thiphâ (Kham) were thereby responsible for the translations of most Chinese literature in that period. Chinese scholars were employed to render Chinese texts -what the Siamese called phongsâwadân čhîn, "Chinese History"- into Siamese, and then well-known scholar-monks were requested to polish the rough texts into a presentable form.[19]

Crawfurd pointed out in 1822, that of all the peoples of the world, the Siamese had high regard for the Chinese alone.[20] Râmâ II and Râmâ III were both admirers of Chinese culture and arts, and one need look no farther than the decorations of Wat Phô in Bangkok which were restored in the

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18) Thiphâkǫrawong, Dynastic Chronicle of the Second Bangkok Reign: 93

19) Natthawut Sutthisongkhrâm, Phû Sâng Wannakam, "Thailand's Great Literary Figures", Bangkok: Rungrû'angsân Press, 1977: 164

20) Crawfurd, op.cit.: 332

third reign. Châophrayâ Thiphâ, like his half-brother, the Somdet Châophrayâ, is said to have observed certain Chinese customs quite rigidly.[21] The adaptation of Chinese historical novels had far-reaching consequences, because it extended the use of prose in Siamese literature; and as prose was much more intelligible to the average person than verse, it attracted a wider audience. But basically, the essence of Chinese wisdom contained in the Chinese historical novels was greatly appreciated by the Siamese ruling class, even after Siam had resumed full contact with the West.

Traditional Siamese scholarship continued to prosper under the first three Chakkrî kings in the cultural drive of the time. But there was a parallel transformation of traditional non-court literature, due to changes in the fortunes of the nobility and the mercantile class. By the third reign the traditional upper-class literature had reached stagnation; the Siamese classics were in the field for a few poets. On the other hand, the folk literature was taking over. In his recent study of early Bangkok literature, Nidhi Aeusrivongse correlates the emergence of the Siamese mercantile class with the new trends in traditional Siamese literature.[22] This transformation was marked not so much by a decline in the prestige of khlông, chan, and kâp metres, but simply the upgrading of the use of phleng for classical plays like Râmmakian, Unnarut, and Inao by the court poets proved a great success. Indeed, the distinction in taste

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21) Natthawut Sutthisongkhrâm, Sâm Châophrayâ, "The Life and Works of the Three Châophrayâ", Bangkok: Âsom Aksǫn, 1963: 555

22) Nidhi, op.cit.: passim.

between the Châonâi princes and the khunnâng (commoner officials and nobility) was not so obvious in the early Bangkok period as in late Ayutthayâ, given the fact that the two social groups were increasingly related by marriage. For instance, the mercantile activities of the khunnâng had transformed them into a group of noblemen-cum-merchants. Their literary taste was by no means so sophisticated. In the past, Siamese court literature had been orally awe-inspiring. But the rise of the bourgeois-like khunnâng had brought into existence the need for a new kind of literature that served their class.

The new kind of literature was no longer religious nor ritualistic, but for pure entertainment. Besides the literary works written for lakhǫn-nâi and lakhǫn-nǫk dramas, the new brand of Siamese literature was aimed at a reading public. Although stories were drawn from episodes of the Chiang Mai 50 Jātakas, a well-known 15th-century Pali work, they could be adapted to a wide range of subjects not permissible in the old literature. There were two factors that made the new literature enormously popular, the klǫn suphâp, a form of phleng perfected by the great poet, Sunthǫn (Phû), and the increasing literacy among the Siamese as a result of Râmâ III's pedagogic policy, and the availability of some new language primers written by Phra Amarâphirakkhitta of Wat Bǫromniwât and Phra Thepmôlî (Phúng) of Wat Râtchabûrana.[23]

Râmâ II was perhaps the greatest patron of Siamese literature in Thai history. An accomplished poet himself,

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23) For biographies of these two scholar-monks, see Natthawut, Phû Sâng Wannakam: 183-217

the king encouraged his bards to express themselves freely. Râmâ II was fond of both lakhǫn-nai and lakhǫn-nǫk plays. He paid special attention to the all-female lakhǫn-nai drama to perfect the performance. One of his lakhǫn-nai plays, Inao, is still acclaimed as the best example of the lakhǫn-nai. As for the lakhǫn-nǫk plays, Râmâ II contributed to some episodes of Khun Châng Khun Phèn, an adaptation of a popular tale dating from early Ayutthayâ. Actually, episodes of the famous Khun Châng Khun Phèn were handed out to the court poets, including Sunthǫn (Phû) and Krommamün Chet, to write in competition. It was the first time that a popular tale was given such prominence in the court literary circle. At the same time, one must note the lack of originality and ingenuity in the field of religious literature in the second reign, although Râmâ II held an assembly of learned monks and court scholars in 1814, and commissioned them to rewrite the six missing acts of the Mahâchât Kham-luang, "A Poem on Buddha's Great Life", the greatest of Siamese religious writings dating from 1482, in the reign of King Bǫrommatrailôk (1448-88) at Ayutthayâ.[24)]

Many of the poets who made their name at Râmâ II's court lived and prospered under the king's aegis, Sunthǫn (Phû) very much so. Phrayâ Trang, Nâi Narinthibet (In), and Sunthǫn (Phû) were contemporary. The first two belonged to the traditional school, and were unrivalled in the khlông composition. Nâi Narin, the Wang Nâ (Front Palace Prince)'s personal attendant, was arguably the most talented poet Siam

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24) Damrong, Prince, Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Rattanakôsin Ratchakân Thî 2, "History of the Second Bangkok Reign", 1916: 385

has ever produced. No one, not even the legendary Sîprât, the great Ayutthayan poet, could write a more heart-rending poem than his famous Nirât Narin (c.1809). But, as the people's poet, Sunthǫn (Phû) was more successful than Nâi In, because he represented a departure from the established court literature and the limiting tradition of khlông and chan versification.

Born in 1786, Sunthǫn (Phû) came from a broken family, and until his death in 1855, he led an ever-wandering life, most of the time as a drunkard, apparently as a result of his personal insecurity. He made his name as a poet with his first works, Nirât Mû'ang Klèng, Nirât Phrabât, and the Tale of Khôbut (c.1807), when he was 21 years old. In the Tale of Khôbut, Sunthǫn (Phû), by his sheer talent, created a new kind of phleng, later referred to as klǫn suphâp or klǫn pèt,[25] and used it to narrate an episode from an extra-canonical jātaka, the so-called 50 Jātakas. His instant success stemmed from the fact that he had introduced an internal rhyming scheme in his poem, which made it sound pleasantly smooth and easy to recite.[26] However, his talent was not recognized by the court until 1816, when he was finally appointed Khun Sunthǫnwôhân in the Department of Royal Scribes. As a favourite of the king's, Sunthǫn (Phû)'s life thereafter was for a while full of promise and happiness. It was only

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25) A stanza of klǫn suphâp devised by Sunthǫn (Phû) consists of four eight-word lines with elaborate internal as well as external rhyming schemes.

26) Fine Arts Dept., Phra Aphaimanî Kham Klǫn Khong Sunthǫnphû, "A Romance of Phra Aphaimanî: Sunthǫn (Phû)'s Poetic Tale", Bangkok: Sinlapâbannâkhân, 1959: see "Introduction", p. 47

his insensitive behaviour towards Krommamün Chet, the future Râmâ III, when he was still not expected to succeed to the throne, that was to condemn him to a miserable life throughout the third reign.

It is common knowledge that Krommamün Chet was originally an admirer of Sunthǫn (Phû)'s immense talent, but an incident turned him against his father's favourite. Râmâ II assigned the prince to compose a part of the lakhǫn-nǫk play, Khun Châng Khun Phèn. Having finished his work, the prince asked Sunthǫn (Phû) to comment or correct where applicable. The famous poet told the prince that his work was beautifully written, and there was no room for him to improve the prince's work. But in a literary forum presided over by Râmâ II, when the piece composed by Krommamün Chet was read before the king for his approval, Sunthǫn (Phû) humorously criticized the prince's literary endeavour. Krommamün Chet felt publicly humiliated, and Sunthǫn (Phû)'s offence was never forgiven by the future king. When he came to the throne in 1824, Râmâ III immediately dismissed the great poet and stripped him of his official rank and title.

Râmâ III's accession came amidst controversy, in preference to his younger Châofâ half-brother, Mongkut, who was to succeed him in 1851, and the Sunthǫn (Phû) misdemeanor left an indelible mark on his mind. Literary forums, so lively in the previous reign, came to an end, and the lakhǫn-nai troupe was disbanded. Court poets had to seek patrons among the čhâonâi and khunnâng outside the Grand Palace. Only a Phra-Ong-Châo prince by birth, son of one of his father's minor wives, the king saw the need to justify his

cause and present himself in the best possible light as one of the most pious of monarchs. Promoting Buddhism was a means of acquiring merit, and it was certainly part of a legitimizing process, especially in the face of the challenge of Christian missionaries who began to propagate their faith in Siam in 1828. Râmâ III is well-remembered today for his religious piety. He was responsible for the building of four new royal monasteries, and the renovation of 35 wats. Writing a eulogy for the king in 1837, Prince-Monk Paramânuchit also emphasized this aspect of Râmâ III's reign.[27] Râmâ III's well-known austerity also seems to have had some influence upon the literature of the period, especially the so-called "Suphâsit" (good adages) literature, which was rather didactic, as on the walls of Wat Phô.

The renovation of Wat Phra Chétuphon (Phô) was very extensive, and in 1838, cost the royal treasury 560,000 ticals.[28] On the monastery walls were engraved inscriptions covering a wide range of subjects from traditional medicine, Buddhist tracts, history, geography, to literary works. It is reported that 35 poets, comprising 6 princes, 18 court scholars, and 11 learned monks, contributed to this large-scale endeavour.[29] It was in a sense the first "open university" of Siam, as the king invited his subjects to come

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27) Fine Arts Dept., Prachum Silâčhârúk Wat Phra Chétuphon (PSč/WPC), "The Inscriptions of Wat Phra Chétuphon" Cremation volume for Somdet Phra Ariyawongsâ, the Supreme Patriarch, 23 April 1974: 714

28) Arunniphâ, M.C., "Phra Nangklâo Châo Yû Hua" (Râmâ III) in Ministry of Education, Thetsanâ Phrarâtchaprawat, "Sermons in Praise of the First Four Reigns of the Bangkok Period", 8th reprint, Bangkok, 1938: 109

29) PSč/WPC: 743

and study the inscriptions. The motives behind this ambitious educational scheme are not hard to find. The king was obviously inspired by and concerned about the Western missionaries's charitable work in the 1830s. Western sources claim that in Buddhist beliefs, the king's charity must not be exceeded by that of any other individual or organization in the kingdom, as this would effect the king's accumulated merit.[30] But the king would have felt threatened by the interest shown by the Siamese élite in Western culture. In the literature section of the Wat Phô inscriptions, Râmâ III expressed his opinion that traditional Siamese literature had suffered a setback because:-

> in the old days, children of good families were engrossed in literary works, and learned how to compose poetry, but now there are many sinful people and few learned men.[31]

He went on to say that it was the duty of a man to do good things, to acquire merit and to follow the good words of wise men. The king also admonished those arrogant poets who "fell too much in love" with their own words, because real misery would pursue them, a reference perhaps to the fallen Sunthǫn (Phû).

The following works dating from the third reign: the anonymous Suphâsit Phra Ruang, The World of Lady Sîčhulâlak, and Kham Khlông Lôkkanit, a work by Krommakhun Déchâdisǫn.. All these works are characteristically of moralizing nature. In the field of religious literature, Râmâ III sponsored

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30) Donald C. Lord, Mo Bradley and Thailand, Michigan, 1969: 76

31) PSč/WPC: 453

another re-compilation of the Buddhist Scriptures, the Tipitaka.[32] But the most important religious work during the third reign was Prince-Monk Paramânuchit's Pathomsomphô-thikathâ, a Siamese rendition of a Chiang Mai Pali text. The author must have completed this monumental work sometime before 1837, because some of its passages are inscribed on the walls of Wat Phô.[33]

Prince-Monk Paramânuchit was one of the greatest poets in the history of Siam. His contribution to the richness of Siamese literature, and in particular, to the inscriptions of Wat Phra Chétuphon, surpassed all others. As an historian, as mentioned above, he was invited by Râmâ III to write an abridged chronicle of Ayutthayâ. And the chronological frame-work of the Thetsanâ Chunlayutthakârawong, which corresponds with the Abridged Chronicle, confirms that it was originally a sermon on the history of Siam delivered by the Prince-Monk in the King's presence.[34] But people have come to remember him as the composer of two outstanding literary works, the historical poem Lilit Taleng Phâi, "Defeat of the Burmese", and Samutthakhôt Kham Chan, "The Romance of Samutthakhôt". The former, atribute to King Narésuan (1590-1605), was probably written in the 1830s. Samutthakhôt is a unique piece of Siamese literature because its was composed by three poets. It was begun by the Phra Mahâ Râtcha Khrû,[35] and then continued by King Nârâi (1656-88) of Ayutthayâ. It was then again

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32) Arunniphâ, op.cit.: 109-10
33) PSč/WPC: 97
34) See PP/66, Khurusaphâ edition, vol. 41: 67
35) King Nârâi's "Royal Teacher".

left unfinished. In 1846, Prince-Monk Paramânuchit, as a most capable Pali scholar and abbot of Wat Phra Chétuphon, was requested by Krommaluang Kraisǫn and Krommaluang Wongsâ to complete the final part of this classical poem. It took the Prince-Monk more than three years before the work was finished. It has become one of the finest piece of Siamese literature.[36)]

The almost complete dispersal of the royal poets during Râmâ III's reign opened the way for some influential princes and noblemen to offer them patronage. However, no one was prepared to offend the King and keep Sunthǫn (Phû) under his roof. This poet entered the monkhood for a while, for his own safety, and then wandered from place to place. But this was Sunthǫn (Phû)'s most productive period, because he had to write to earn his living. Of his 24 works so far discovered, nine were written during the third reign. Sunthǫn (Phû) was the greatest master of Nirât poems. Nirât means "separation from a loved one". In this type of literature the poet laments the misfortune that causes him to be away from his wife, or lover.[37)] Sunthǫn (Phû)'s peregrinations inspired him to write at least eight Nirât poems over the years. The best Nirât Sunthǫn (Phû) ever wrote was the Nirât Phûkhao Thǫng (1828), on a visit to Ayutthayâ. The least successful of his works is said to be the Nirât Mû'ang Suphan, written in the classical khlông metre, which seems to have eclipsed

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36) Natthawut Sutthisongkhrâm, Krom Somdet Phra Paramânuchit, "The Life and Works of Prince-Monk Paramânuchit", Bangkok: Watthanâ Press, 1962: 369

37) See also Manas Chitakasem, "The Emergence and Development of the Nirat Genre in Thai Poetry", JSS, 60, 2 (Jul.1972): 135-68

his natural gift for klon.[38]

Sunthon (Phû) was a man of unbounded imagination. As a story-teller, he enchanted the hearts of his readers. The most well-known of his works is Phra Aphaimanî in which he cleverly blended themes from the classic Persian Tales and the Chinese historical novel, Saihan, translated in the first reign.[39] It was started in the second reign, and met with much success. The main body of the work was only written in the 1830s, when Sunthon (Phû) was briefly being sheltered by Prince Lakkhanâ (1812-35), one of Râmâ III8s sons, whose daughter became first full queen to King Mongkut. Following the prince's death, Sunthon (Phû) became a protégé of Krom-mamûn Appason Sudâthep, Râmâ III's favourite daughter. It was she who asked the poet to continue his story to its end.[40]

The writing of Phra Aphaimanî appears to have been interrupted again by the untimely death of the princess in 1845. Sunthon (Phû) was again in distress until he entered the service of Mongkut's full brother and Second King Pinklâo (former Prince Chuthâmanî) in 1851, and was given his old rank and title. He must have completed his masterpiece in the early 1850s. It was published for the first time in 1870, by the printing firm of missionary Samuel J. Smith, fifteen years after the great poet's death.

Phra Aphaimanî, containing many thousand stanzas, is

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38) Fine Arts Dept., Phra Aphaimanî: 49

39) ibid.: 60-4

40) Somphong Kriangkraiphet, Chîwit Lèh Ngân Kawî Ek Khong Thai, "Life and Works of the Greatest Thai Poet", Bangkok: Phânfâ Phitthayâ, 1965: 310

the longest Thai poem with the most elaborate structure. What has made it so special among the literary works of the early Bangkok period is the fact that it captured the spirit of the age in which it was written. The complexity of its themes reveal some interesting things. First, Sunthon (Phû) showed that he was very much influenced by Chinese literary traditions. Second, Phra Aphaimani, more than any other work, represented the Siamese view of and attitude towards the West; it expresses a contradiction between outward tolerance and an inward sense of contempt for, and superiority over foreigners, whom the Siamese had called the mitchâthitthi, "those who hold false beliefs". About the centuries-old distrust of Westerners, as reflected in Siamese arts and literature, Mattani Rutnin explains:-

> In the painting of this period, Europeans were often caricatured as the followers of Mārā, the God of Evil, who came to tempt the Buddha before His Enlightenment. They were portrayed as sinners being grotesquely and cruelly punished in Hell. On temple walls, French and Portuguese soldiers, diplomats, and priests are usually presented in the Lower World together with demons, ogres and semi-human or sub-human beings. In dramatic literature such as Phra Aphai Mani by Sunthon Phu.., farang (White Europeans) sometimes appear in villainous or comic roles. The curious paradox between the outward tolerance and acceptance of Western culture for the benefits of their country and the inner sense of Thai superiority over and contempt for farang, as well as for other foreigners, is an enduring characteristics of the Thai relationship with other countries.41)

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41) Mattani Rutnin, Modern Thai Literature: The Process of Modernization and the Transformation of Values, whole volume of East Asian Cultural Studies, 17, 1/4 (1978): 7; The hatred of Europeans and Christian priests was

Third, according to Prince Damrong, many people who read Phra Aphaimanî when it was published in 1870, thought of Sunthǫn (Phû) as an eccentric person and Phra Aphaimanî a weird story, because the poet claimed apparently ignorantly that the population of Langkâ (Ceylon) were farang, "Europeans", and also that they had a young queen, who had just come to the throne.[42] And Sunthǫn (Phû) had his hero, Phra Aphai, fall in love with her, although they were supposed to be enemies.

This is in fact Sunthǫn (Phû)'s peculiar way of recording international events, by means of events written down in the form of poetry. In the 1830s, the Siamese were beginning to have a wider world-view, and the Protestant missionaries brought in news about the outside world. In 1815, Ceylon had become one of Britain's colonies. Many missions sent by the Siamese saṅgha came into contact with the British authority there. Sunthǫn (Phû) was thus quite right in the sense that the ruling class of Ceylon were farang. Also, Queen Victoria came to the throne of England in 1837, and as a result, she was regarded as the sovereign of Ceylon. Thus Sunthǫn (Phû) was again correct in presenting Ceylon in this light.

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also apparently intense, even in the remote principality of Nân in North Thailand. J.G. Scott, a British Minister in Bangkok during the fifth reign, reported seeing a mural painting at a Nân temple in which Europeans, especially French and Portuguese were depicted as suffering in the "Traiphûm" Hells. See: G.E. Mitton, Scott of the Shan Hills, London: John Murray, 1936: 207-8; That the people of the North resented the presence of Christian missionaries in the early 19th century was mentioned by Sir John Bowring in his The Kingdom and People of Siam, vol. II, Oxford in Asia reprint, 1969: 14-21

42) Damrong, "Introduction" in Phra Aphaimanî: 58

It is quite certain that Sunthǫn (Phû) wrote the second half of his masterpiece after 1837, the date of Queen Victoria's accession. He probably finished this extraordinary romance just before his death in 1855. In Phra Aphaimanî the conflict between Ceylon and the hero's country, an imaginary Thai kingdom, was reflective of the strained relations between Siam and Britain in the late 1840s. The farang were said to have possessed mechanized gadgets and instruments whereas the Siamese hero had only a magic flute. If Sunthǫn (Phû) used Phra Aphaimanî to represent any real person at all, one cannot help thinking of the popular Prince Chuthâmanî, his final patron, whose flambuoyant character and musical talent far exceeded anyone else in the kingdom.[43)]

Phra Aphaimanî was written in a period when the Europeans were trying to convince the Siamese élite of the superiority of Western technology and science. In his story, Sunthǫn (Phû) voiced the Siamese unwillingness to change; and as an ex-monk, he made fun of the Christian priests. The hero's magic flute undoubtedly represented in the poet's mind the spiritual and supernatural power that the Siamese mass believed in. The magic flute was not only a sweet-sounding instrument, but had a devastating power that could destroy the most menacing enemy.

Sunthǫn (Phû) was by no means the only poet of the period to have produced a remarkable work based on a real situ-

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43) G.R. Williamson, (ed.), Mémoir of the Rev. David Abeel, Scholarly Resources, Inc., reprint, 1972: 107; Cf. Natthawut Sutthisongkhrâm, Kasat Wang Nâ, "The Front Palace King", Bangkok: Phrè Kânchang, 1972: passim.

ation and real characters. A sense of realism was becoming an accepted feature of the third-reign literature. Phra Mahâ Montrî (Sap), one of the least known Siamese poets, was perhaps the most radical in his approach to literature. His now famous satirical play, Raden Landai, "The Romance of Beggar-King Landai", represented a complete break with the traditional concept of "good" literature. Until then (the 1830s), Siamese poets had concentrated on the so-called rû'ang čhakčhak wong-wong, "adventures of the princes and princesses", whose protagonists and antagonists invariably had to be confined to the upper-class circle; even Sunthǫn (Phû)'s Phra Aphaimanî conforms to this established tradition. A short poem, Raden Landai has a simple structure involving four characters, a beggar named Landai, his wife named Nâng Pradèh, Landai's lover, and Pradèh's lover. It was intended to be a dramatization of four real Malay characters living in Bangkok, whose entangled lives provided gossip for the neighbourhood of Sao-Ching-Châ District. To the unaware reader, Raden Landai was an hilarious story of the people he knew, sometimes verging on vulgarity. Phra Mahâ Montrî (Sap) calls the protagonist a Raden (Javanese-King), implying that his work is a parody of Râmâ II's much acclaimed lakhǫn-nai play, Inao. He used all the royal attributes to describe his lowly "hero", who is a beggar living in a "castle with broken spire", and his wife, who is a slave. To a critical reader, Phra Mahâ Montrî (Sap) was being critical of the social environment of that time. In an attempt to make known his protest, this radical poet made a mockery of the princely class, and the establishment, in such a strange way that he could not be accused of lèse majesté. Phra Mahâ

Montrî (Sap)'s intention was to depict the life of the lower-class people, and to highlight their problems such as gambling and alcoholism, a reality not known to the insulated world of the upper-class people.

Phra Mahâ Montrî (Sap) was also responsible for another pieced of work known as the Phlengyâo Bat Sonthé, a short poem. Bat Sonthé means "allegation bill". In it, Phra Maha Montrî, who was head of the Department of the Police of the Inside Right, publicly condemned Chamün Râchâmât, his counterpart in the Department of the Police of the Inside Left, for corruption, overbearing, and intimidation of the people. The accused Chamün is said in the poem to have intimidated the Chinese community so much that the Chinese feared him more than Phrayâ Chôdúk, the official in charge of the Chinese affairs. But the Chamün (later Phrayâ Mahâthep), who had a sakdinâ, "dignity mark", of 800, was not prepared to bring this serious matter to the king for redress, partly because Phrayâ Mahâ Montrî (Sap), who had a sakdinâ of 2,000, was his superior, and what the latter alleged had some elements of truth.[44] Phlengyâo Bat Sonthé is the first political poem not to have been suppressed by the old régime. Phra Mahâ Montrî (Sap) was in a sense a precursor of the fifth-reign political com-

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44) Chit Phûmisak, op.cit.: 62-3; Little indeed is known of the life and career of Phra Mahâ Montrî (Sap), and he does not feature prominently in Plû'ang ṇa Nakhṇon's standard textbook on Thai literature, Prawat Wannakhadî Thai, op.cit., nor in Paul Schweisguth's Etude sur la littérature siamoise, op.cit.; Chit Phûmisak provides a most interesting study of this poet's works.

Châophrayâ Thiphâ (Dynastic Chronicle of the Third Bangkok Reign) also had an adverse comment on the behaviour of the princes and the police "who arrested the people and tried them at will, and took young women away from their parents to become their concubines. This happened time after time, and the people were in despair" (p. 365)

mentators like Luang Phatthanaphongphakdî (Thim Sukhayâng, 1848-1915), author of the controversial Nirât Nǫngkhâi, and Thianwan, who were to suffer dire consequences at the hands of the government for their political literature.

III

The New "Past":

Mongkut's Discovery of the Sukhôthai Inscriptions.

In 1833, Prince-Monk Mongkut, a half-brother to Râmâ III, went on pilgrimage to the Buddhist shrines in Upper Siam. At Sukhôthai, the capital of the 13th and 14th-century Siamese kingdom, he came across a large slab of stone set in masonry beside the ruins of an old prâsât (royal hall of residence), and near it he found what was to become one of the most famous stone inscriptions of South-East Asia, the Râmkhamhèng inscription of 1292?. This eventful discovery was fully recorded by his adopted son, Châophrayâ Mahin (Pheng Phenkun), who claimed to be an eye-witness.[45] Prince-Patriarch Wachirayân, a son of King Mongkut, also wrote of this memorable event, apparently quoting verbatim from the Châophrayâ. The latter's diary records this event in an usually absorbed way and shows the writer's awed feelings. I shall translate this special entry as follows:-

> On Thursday, sixth of the third waxing moon, (the Prince-Monk) returned to his river-boat and headed downstream. On Friday, seventh of the third waxing moon, (he) arrived at a place called Thâ Râtchathânî; thence he fol-

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45) Prayut Sitthiphan, Somdet Phra Chǫmklâo Châo Krung Sayâm, "Mongkut, the Sovereign of Siam", vol.I, Bangkok: Sayâm Press, 1973: 37

lowed the course of the river up to Sukhôthai. He took up his dwelling-place in the main hall of Wat KIâng in Sukhôthai. In the evening, he was out touring in the vicinity of the ruins of an abandoned prâsât. The Prince-Monk found a slab of stone near to the ancient palace. This slab of stone had been stood up some time before but it had fallen down against a heap of mould at the base of the prâsât. The local people regarded it as an object of reverence. Many people had made offerings to it, and their requests had been entirely fulfilled. The people of the town thus organized a fête such as a boxing show every year to placate it. It was sacred, and was not to be violated; anyone who dared to show his disrespect and come close to it became ill. Having listened to the warnings of the town officials, the Prince-Monk walked straight towards the stone. The attending officials lost heart for fear of what might happen to the Prince-Monk. With lips trembling, they tried to dissuade the Prince-Monk from approaching the stone, anticipating the stroke of misfortune.

Heeding no warning, the Prince-Monk walked up to the flat stone and commanded: "Thou shalt harm me not, thou shalt harm me not". Having said so, he graciously seated himself on the stone and uttered these words: "Here you are in the midst of the forest. Let me take you to Bangkok so that you will hear the Dhamma, observed the Buddha's precepts and enjoy the blissfulness of the City. The City is more pleasant than this northern town." At that moment, the atmosphere was calm and peaceful. Misfortune befell no one. All who were present there felt happy.

Before returning to Bangkok, the Prince-Monk had enjoined that the stone slab be transported to Bangkok on a raft. When it had arrived in the City, the Prince-Monk caused a pedestal to be erected. On it, the Prince-Monk put the stone slab, under the tamarind tree in front of the ceremonial hall of Wat Samorâi (where he resided).

> Beside it he placed the stone inscription, engraved with the Khmer letters,[46] which had been removed from Sukhôthai at the same time as the stone slab. When the Prince-Monk ascended the throne /ās King/, he had the stone slab and the (two) inscriptions transferred to a pavilion within the precinct of the Royal Chapel in the vicinity of the Grand Palace.[47]

What Mongkut had discovered in 1833 consisted of a stone throne, called Manangsilâbât, King Lithai's Khmer inscription, and the Râmkhamhèng inscription. After their discovery in 1833, Mongkut came to regard the stone throne and the two ancient inscriptions as a miraculous manifestation of fate foretelling his own accession to the throne. The Khmer inscription was deciphered first. Again, Châophrayâ Mahin speaks out Mongkut's mind:-

> As for the Khmer letters engraved on the stone, their translation into Thai results in an account praising the magical prowess of a king who ruled Sukhôthai as the great capital. It appears to be an outline of the history of the northerners at that period. In retrospect, it seems that the stone slab and the inscription were a divine manifestation of the will of the God of Sukhôthai assuring the Prince-Monk that he would become a great king possessing great honour and prestige like the Phrachâo Kamrateng-An Sî Surayawong Râm Mahâ Thammarâchâthirât, the Supreme Ruler of Sîsatchanâlai, such as recorded in the stone inscriptions he caused to be brought down to Bangkok.[48]

Historiographically, Mongkut's revelation of the two stone inscriptions of Sukhôthai marked a new era of Thai

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46) A reference to Lithai's inscription, No. 4 in PSČ/I
47) Prayut Sitthiphan, op.cit.; Cf. Wachirayân, op.cit.: 141
48) Prayut Sitthiphan, op.cit.: 38

historical tradition. The nineteenth-century Siamese had no more than a hazy recollection of their remote history. The Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ, which was the official history of the kingdom, never traced the origin of the Siamese back beyond the founding of Ayutthayâ by Râmâthibọdi I, as ascribed to 1351. The pre-Ayutthayâ history was totally confusing, but a cult hero, the legendary Phra Ruang, king of Sukhôthai, was well-known to the Siamese from the Phongsâwadân Nû'a, "History of Upper Siam", compiled in 1807 from local folk-tales. In these oral sources, Phra Ruang was made the first independent Siamese king, because he was believed to have liberated the Siamese from Khmer yoke, and ruled a prosperous, powerful kingdom. For the first time, the two inscriptions brought by Mongkut from Sukhôthai provided concrete evidence that Sukhôthai had been a powerful state in the thirteenth century prior to the foundation of Ayutthayâ, and that Phra Ruang was an historical personage. The Râmkhamhèng inscription in particular, gives a detailed account of the daily life of the people of Sukhôthai, their customs and manners, and interesting information about their ancient paternalistic form of government. Indeed, it is a document well worth reproducing here as a classic specimen of Siamese prose. It is almost impossible to retain the flavour of rhythmic medieval Siamese in the English translation, but I shall render it in the way that is understood by ordinary Siamese. The first part begins with King Râmkhamhèng's life story, whereas the second part relates the culture of thirteenth-century Sukhôthai. The text of the inscription is as follows:-

First Part[49]

My father was named Sî Intharâthit.[50] My mother was named Nâng Sû'ang. My brother was named Bân Mû'ang. I have five brothers and sisters, who were born of the same womb; three male and two female. My eldent brother died when he was a child. When I grew up and reached the age of 19, Khun Sâm Chon, Lord of the City of Chọt came and attacked the town of Tâk. My father went to fight Khun Sâm Chon by charging the elephant to the left. Khun Sâm Chon drove forward to the right. Khun Sâm Chon led a charge with force. My father's subjects fled in confusion. I did not flee. I was riding an elephant named Nékaphon. I pushed him in front of my father and engaged Khun Sâm Chon in an elephant duel. Khun Sâm Chon withdrew and fled. My father thence called me Phra Râmkhamhèng[51] because I had fought an elephant duel with Khun Sâm Chon.

During the lifetime of my father, I served my father and mother. Whenever I caught any game or fish, I brought them to my father. Whenever I picked any acid or sweet fruits, I selected good ones and brought them to my father. Whenever I went rounding up elephants I brought them to my father. Whenever I attacked a village or town and captured tusked elephants, men and women of rank, silver and gold, I gave them all to my father. When my father

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49) The first part is believed to have been in King Râmkhamhèng's own literary style. The text of this inscription has been translated into French and English by many scholars. Not all of them agree on every difficult point. My translation is based partly on that of A.B. Griswold and Prasert ṇa Nagara, "The Inscription of King Rāma Gaṃhèṅ of Sukhôdaya (1292)", JSS, 59, 2 (Jul. 1971): 203-20. My intention is to adhere strictly to the original meaning of the words and phrases although this can result in some distortion in the English version. Wherever I differ from Griswold & Prasert, it will be indicated, and should be considered an alternative interpretation.

50) Cf. "Sî Inṭharabọdintharâthit" in No. 2, PSǒ/I: 38

51) meaning "as brave and valiant as Râmâ [God Vishnu]"

passed away and my brother was still alive, I served my brother in the same way as I had my father. When my brother died, I got the whole kingdom to myself.

Second Part

During the lifetime of Phọ-Khun Râmkhamhèng,[52] the City of Sukhôthai was good. There was fish in the water and rice in the paddy fields. The Ruler of the City did not levy toll on his subjects for travelling the roads; they could lead their cattle to trade and ride their horses to sell. Whoever wanted to trade in elephants, did so; whoever wanted to trade in horses, did so; whoever wanted to trade in silver and gold, did so. When any commoner, member of the princely family or member of the nobility,[53] died, his entire estate: clothing,[54] elephants, wives and children, rice granaries, retainers,

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52) The Thai Phrase "เมื่อชั่วพ่อขุนรามคำแหง", (During the lifetime of Phọ-Khun Râmkhamhèng), suggests that this is a description of the past. The whole text that comes after it tells of the good things of Sukhôthai during the reign of Râmkhamhèng in a most nostalgic mood. Even the king is referred to in the third person. It must seem very odd that the same engraver should have changed his style in such a sudden manner. Events after the reign of this king are obscure and at best confusing. The inscription of Nakhọn Chum (No. 3 in PSč/I, dated 1357, implies that Sukhôthai went temporarily into decline following the reign of Râmkhamhèng. Prîdâ Sîchalâlai, a well-known epigraphist, thinks that textually, this part of the inscription could have been engraved in the reign of King Lithai (1347-c.1368), who wanted to extol the good deeds of his grandfather. See: Prasert na Nagara, "Khwâmhen Rû'ang Čhârúk Phọ-Khun Râmkhamhèng" (An Opinion on the Râmkhamhèng Inscription), reprinted in Phon-ngân Khonkhwâ Prawattisât Thai, "Researches on Thai History", Special edition for the funeral of Nai Bunrû'ang ṇa Nagara, 31 Oct. 1971: 83

53) Cf. Griswold & Prasert, ibid.: 206, who translate "lûk čhâo lûk khun" as "men of rank".

54) A conjectural translation. Griswold & Prasert (ibid.: 206 fn.28) read the word in question as "sû'a kham" and render it "the deceased". I follow Coedès ("Notes critiques sur l'inscription de Rāma Kamheng", JSS, 12, 6 (1918): 5) who read the word as "sû'a khâ" and translated it "vêtements".

and groves and areca and betel, was bequeathed to his son. If a commoner and a man of rank differed and disagreed, the king looked into the case impartially and administered justice to the commoner not by siding with the one who stole and concealed.[55] The king did not covet the rice belonging to other people. He was not engulfed with the fire of envy when he saw the wealth of other people. If anyone came riding an elephant to place his town under his protection, the king would support him. If he had no elephants, no horses, no lords and ladies, no silver and no gold, the king gave these to him, and helped him found a village or town. When he captured enemy warriors, he killed them not, he beat them not.

Over there at the front of the gate was hung a bell. If any distressed commoner, who lived in the City, had grievances, which sickened his stomach and perturbed his heart, and wanted to air them with the king, he would not miss him. If he rang the bell, Phọ-Khun Râmkhamhèng, upon hearing it, would meet him and investigate the matters justly. Thus, the people of the City of Sukhôthai all admired him. They planted the groves of areca and the groves of betel all over the City. The groves of coconut were in abundance in this City. The groves of jackfruit were in abundance in this City. The grove of mangoes were in abundance in this City, as well as the groves of the tamarind trees. Whoever planted anything, got its fruits.

In the middle of the City of Sukhôthai was a marvellous pond, the water which was clear and as good to drink as the water of the Mè Không [river] during the dry season.

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55) Cf. Griswold & Prasert, ibid.: 207
"When commoners or men of rank differ and disagree, [the King] examines the case to get at the truth and then settles it justly for them."
I take "ข้า" in "สังแล่งความแก่ข้า" as meaning strictly the commoner as opposed to men of rank, while Griswold & Prasert translate it as "them" (both the commoner and the man of rank).

Encircling the City of Sukhôthai were the triple walls measuring three thousand and four hundred arm-lengths. The people of Sukhôthai liked to give alms and observe the precepts. Phọ-Khun Râmkhamhèng, Lord of Sukhôthai, together with the court ladies, the princes, men and women of rank, and all the noblefolk without exception, both male and female, all had faith in the Religion of the Buddha, and observed the precepts during the rainy season. At the close of the rainy season, they celebrated the kathin ceremonies,[56] which lasted a month. When presenting the kathin, there were heaps of cowries, heaps of areca nuts, heaps of flowers, and also many cushions and pillows. Each year, the gifts given in the kathin celebration amounted to two million pieces. Everyone went to the Aranyik[57] over there for recitation of the kathin occasion. Returning to the City, the people formed a line all the way from the Aranyik to the parade ground. They repeatedly did homage together,[58] accompanied by the sound of musical instruments and the singing. Whoever wanted to play, did so; whoever wanted to laugh, did so; whoever wanted to sing, did so. The City of Sukhôthai had four main gates, and the people came crowding in to watch the king light the candles and set off fireworks. This City, Sukhôthai, was filled with people as though it might burst.

In the centre of the City of Sukhôthai there were phihân,[59] there were golden Buddha images. There was a Buddha statue called Phra Atthârot, eighteen cubits in height. There were big statues of the Buddha; there were statues of the Buddha of moderate size. There were

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56) kathin = "yellow robes presented to monks at the start of the rainy season"

57) "Quarter of the forest-dweller monks".

58) Conjectural translation.

59) vihāra (Pal.) = "abode of monks, central hall where Buddha statues are kept"

big phihân and medium-sized ones. There were monks, nisaiyamutta,[60] thera,[61] and mahāthera.[62]

To the west of the City of Sukhôthai was situated the Aranyik. Phọ-Khun Râmkhamhèng built and presented it as a gift to the mahāthera Patriarch, who was well-versed in the Tipitaka, who was wiser than any monk in this City, and who came from the City of Sithammarât.[63]

In the centre of the Aranyik boundary, there was a phihân of great height and beauty. There was a standing Buddha of eighteen cubits height.

To the east of the City of Sukhôthai (one would find) a phihân and senior monks, a majestic lake, groves of areca and groves of betel, vegetable gardens and rice-fields, villages large and small, groves of the mango trees and groves of the tamarind trees. (These) were all beautiful to look at as though they had been made for that purpose.

To the north of the City, there was an open market;[64] there was a statue of Buddha, Phra Ačhon; there was a royal residence; there were groves of the coconut trees and groves of the jackfruit trees. There were vegetable gardens and rice-fields. There were settlements; there were big villages and small villages.

To the south of the City there were kutí,[65] phihân, and learned monks. There was a reservoir. There were

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60) "One who is set free from reliance on support"; monk who has been ordained for at least five years.

61) "Monk who has the seniority of ten rainy seasons"

62) "Monk who has been ordained for at least twenty years"

63) The equation of "Mû'ang Sthammarât" in this inscription with modern Nakhọn Sîthammarât in Southern Thailand is universally accepted, although it could have been Thaton, or Suthammanakhọn, a thriving Mọn kingdom and Buddhist centre in Lower Burma.

64) The Siamese word pâsân derived its origin from the Persian word "Bazaar", "a market".

65) = "monks' living units"

groves of coconuts and jackfruits, groves of mangoes and tamarinds. There were mountain streams. There was the Spirit of the Phra Khaphung Phî, which was God of the Mountain and Lord of all the spirits in the City. Whatever lord ruled Sukhôthai, if he made the right offerings to the Spirit, he would rule a stable and thriving city. If he did not show obeisance and make the right offerings to the Spirit of the Mountain, it would not protect him and the city was bound to be lost.

In 1214 Saka (A.D. 1292), a Dragon Year, Phọ-Khun Râmkhamhèng, lord of the kingdom of Sîsatchanâlai-Sukhôthai, who had planted these sugar-palm trees fourteen years before, commanded his craftsmen to cut a slab of stone, and place it in the midst of these sugar-palm trees. On the day of the new moon, the eighth day of the waxing moon, the day of the full moon, and the eighth day of the waning moon, one of the learned monks or thera or mahathera would go up and sit on the stone slab to preach the Dhamma (Law) to the throng of lay people who observed the precepts. When it was not the day for preaching the Law to the people, Phọ-Khun Râmkhamhèng, lord of the kingdom of Sîsatchanâlai-Sukhôthai, would go up, sit on the stone slab, and let the officials, the princes and the nobles, discuss affairs of state with him. On the day of the new moon and the day of the full moon, when the white elephant named Rûčhasî had been decked out with howdah and tasseled head cloth, and always with gold on both tusks, Phọ-Khun Râmkhamhèng mounted him, and rode away to pay homage to (the Buddha statue)[66] at the Aranyik, and then he returned.

There was an inscription in the City of Chaliang,[67]

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66) Conjectural reconstruction. Cf. Griswold & Prasert, ibid.: 215, "to pay homage to the Saṅgharāja (Patriarch)"

67) Chaliáng was perhaps the old town of Sîsatchanâlai near Sukhôthai. In the Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Nû'a, it is called Sawankhalôk, and said to have been built by an ascetic named Satchanâlai.

erected beside the Temple of Phra Sî Rattanathât. There was one in a cave called Tham Phra Râm (Cave of Rama, God Vishnu), which is on the bank of the Samphai. There was one in a cave called Tham Rattanathân. In the midst of the sugar-palm trees, there were two pavilions; one was called Sâlâ Phra Mât, "Pavilion of the Golden Buddha", the other, Phuttha Sâlâ, "Pavilion of Lord Buddha". This stone slab is called Manangsilâbât. It was installed at this place so that all could see.

Phọ-Khun Râmkhamhèng, son of Phọ-Khun Sî Intharâthit, was king of Sîsatchanâlai-Sukhôthai. All the Mâ, the Kâo, the Lâo, the Tai of the lands under the vault of heaven, and the Tai who lived along the Ũ and the Khọng, came to pay homage to him.[68]

In 1207 Saka, a Pig Year,[69] the king caused the holy relics to be dug up so that the people could see and worship them for one month and six days. Then they were deposited in the centre of the City of Sîsatchanâlai, upon which a čhédî (pagoda) was built. It took six years before the čhédî was completed. A wall of rock enclosing the relics was then built and it took a further three years before it was finished.

Formerly, this type of Tai script did not exist.[70]

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68) They are all ethnic Tai groups. The "lands under the vault of heaven" is a reference to Yunnan in Southern China.

69) The engraver made a mistake here because 1207 Saka, or A.D. 1283, was a Cock Year.

70) It is generally accepted that Râmkhamhèng only devised the Sukhôthai script, a type of Tai letters, in 1283, but he did not claim to have created the Tai writing. The phrase "Mû'a Kọn Lâi Sŭ Thai Nî Bọh Mî" does not exclude the possibility of there having either existed a different sort of writing either in another Tai group or even at Sukhôthai; it only implies that all writings bearing a resemblance to that of Râmkhamhèng derive from the latter, and that any document having such characteristics is posterior to 1283. G. Coedès believed that Râmkhamhèng devised the Sukhôthai script from the old Mọn and the cursive Khmer letters. What is unique about the new script is that all the vowels and consonants are placed evenly on the same line as in the Roman

In 1205 Saka, a Goat Year, Phọ-Khun Râmkhamhèng set his mind and his heart on devising these Tai letters. These Tai letters exist because that lord devised them. Phọ-Khun Râmkhamhèng aspired to become lord of all the Tai. He aspired to become a sage in order to teach all Tai peoples to understand truly the merit and the Law.[71] Amongst the men who live in the lands of the Tai, therefore, there was no one to equal him in knowledge and wisdom, in bravery and courage, and in strength and energy. He was able to quell a throng of enemies. (For that reason, he) possessed a vast kingdom and a great number of elephants.[72] To the east, he received the submissions of these towns: Sa Luang, Sọng Khwè, Lumbâčhâi, Sa-Khâ, and his authority reached[73] the banks of the Khọng, Wiang Chan Wiang Kham, being the limit. To the south, these towns submitted: Khonthî, Phra Bâng, Phrèk, Suphannaphûm, Râtchaburî, Phetchaburî, Sîthammarât, and his authority reached the seacoasts. To the west, his authority extended to Chọt,..., Hongsâwadî,[74] and the seas.

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script. Nevertheless, the writing of Râmkhamhèng was short-lived; the next oldest inscription dated 1339, which was engraved with similar script, had already placed the vowels above and below the consonants.

See: Louis Finot, "Laotian Writings" in René de Berval, (ed.), Kingdom of Laos: The Land of the Million Elephants and of the White Parasol, trs. Mme. Teissier du Cros, et al., Saigon, 1959: 307-27

G. Coedès, Tamnân Akṣọn Thai, "History of the Thai Alphabets", Bangkok, 1925: 6-10

71) Cf. Griswold & Prasert, ibid.: 218fn.126 who omit throughout the translation of the Siamese word hâ, "to seek, aspire", thinking it is used only as an affirmative particle. I think otherwise.

72) Cf. Griswold & Prasert, ibid.:- "He was able to subdue a throng of enemies who possessed broad kingdoms and many elephants".

73) Debatable translation. "Thâo Fang Khọng" means literally "to reach the bank of the River Khọng", i.e. the king's authority just "reached the west bank of the Mekhong and did not extend beyond that. Wiang Chan could even have been under Khmer rule.

74) Pegu, capital of a Mọn kingdom in Lower Burma.

> To the north, his dependencies included Phrè, Mân, N.., Phlua, and beyond the banks of the River Khǫng, Chawâ was the limit. The king looked after all those who lived in these lands in accordance with the Law of the Religion, each one of them.

In the early days of epigraphic study in Siam in the first half of the 19th century, the two Sukhôthai inscriptions contributed much more to the rise of didactic literature than to a better understanding of the history of Sukhôthai itself. Although King Mongkut has been acclaimed as the founder of Siamese epigraphy because, when he set about deciphering Râmkhamhèng's famous inscription, there was no one in the world who had ever tried to read an inscription written in old Siamese,[75] it is fair to say that the Siamese, a people without "history", lacked even the knowledge to distinguish between Râmkhamhèng and his grandson, Lithai. The confusion arose because Phra Ruang had become a generic name of the kings of Sukhôthai.

One of the most well-known religious works entitled Tebhūmikathā, or Traiphûm Phra Ruang is believed by many historians to have been composed by King Lithai whose name appears in the colophon of this work. The date of composition is said to be "23, Cock Year" of an unknown era. According to the Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Nû'a, Phra Ruang, King of Sîsatchanâlai, abolished the old Buddhist Era and the Chunla Sakkarât, "Lesser Era", and introduced a new one. As Lithai is said in the Traiphûm to have ruled Sîsatchanâlai for six years when he composed the Traiphûm in "23, Cock Year", it would seem that "23, Cock Year" belonged to the new era. The myth of Phra Ruang introducing a new era in the Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Nû'a,

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75) Griswold & Prasert, op.cit.: 182

and King Lithai writing the Traiphûm in "23, Cock Year" may have originated from two sources, the influence of Burman/Mon traditional historiography, and Lithai's Khmer inscription. According to the latter, the king is said to:-

> have learnt the Vinaya and the Abhidhamma in conformity with the method of the traditional masters, namely, the brahmans and ascetics. The king knows all the Veda, treatises, traditions, laws and maxims, and the science of astronomy ...the years, the months, the eclipses of the sun, the eclipses of the moon... He is capable of calculating the defective years, of taking away from, erasing, or adding to them days, months, etc.[76]

If the text of the Traiphûm was not falsified, the colophon must have been interpolated by an Ayutthayan scribe who had a hazy conception of true Sukhôthai history.[77] In fact all the inscriptions dated in Lithai's reign employ the Mahâ Sakkarât, "Greater Era".

The revelation of the inscriptions of Râmkhamhèng and Lithai in 1833 not only reingorced the old beliefs in the Phra Ruang myth, but also gave new stimulus to the Siamese ruling class to hark back to a golden past. Paternalism of the kind described in the Râmkhamhèng inscription was seen as an ideal form of government. It was by no means a coincidence that in 1836, the Phra Khlang Minister (Dit Bunnâk) ordered a big drum to be made and presented to the king. Râmâ III

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76) PSč/I: No.4, F.2/1-7/80; Cf. Coedès, "Documents sur la dynastie de Sukhodaya", BEFEO, 17, 2 (1917): 13-7; Cf. Griswold & Prasert, "The Epigraphy of Mahādharmarāja I of Sukhodaya, Part I", JSS, 61, 1 (Jan. 1973): 136-44

77) Michael Vickery, "A Note on the Date of the Traibhūmikathā", JSS, 62, 2 (Jul. 1974): 278, 283

called it Klǫng Winichai Phérî, "Petition Drum", and ordered new proceedings to be implemented whereby a commoner could air his grievances to the king more directly than before.[78] In the meanwhile, a collection of old Siamese proverbs and sayings was engraved on the walls of Wat Phra Chétuphon (Phô) in 1837/8. These poetic proverbs were attributed to Phra Ruang of Sukhôthai, and thus called Suphâsit Phra Ruang, "A Didactic Poem by Phra Ruang". It is obvious that these proverbs and sayings could not be convincingly dated to the Sukhôthai period, at least in terms of the language used.

As already noted, one of the most interesting works produced in the early Bangkok period is Lôk Khǫng Nâng Nopphamât or Tamrap Thâo Sîčhulâlak, "The World of Lady Sîčhulâlak", also apparently owing something to the discovery of the Sukhôthai inscriptions.

Undated and written by an anonymous writer(s), The World of Lady Sîčhulâlak is narrated in the first person by someone who claimed to be a minor queen of Phra Ruang of Sukhôthai. The story begins some time before Phra Ruang has introduced a new era, and ends in the 18th year of the new era. The author describes the scene at Sukhôthai, life in Phra Ruang's court, royal ceremonies of various months, and in between, moral tales. According to Prince Damrong, there are five or six slightly different versions of this work.[79] King Mongkut is known to have admired this book, and King

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78) Thiphâkǫrawong, Dynastic Chronicle of the Third Bangkok Reign: 363-4

79) See Prince Damrong, "Introduction" in Fine Arts Dept., Nâng Nopphamât, "Story of Nâng Nopphamât", 1970: ๔-๙

Chulâlongkọn believed it was originally a pre-Bangkok work, probably an adaptation of a Brahman's treatises. But it is the consensus that the narrative style of The World belongs to the second or third Bangkok reign periods.[80]

The author of this book must have known the Traiphûm Phra Ruang, because he evidently tried to set the background of his story against it, especially by mention of the year "18th of the new Lesser Era".[81] It is then supposed to be a pre-quel to the Traiphûm written by King Lithai in the year "23, Cock Year". Although many people think of it as an historical work, it is definitely a fake. On the other hand, ironically, The World must be considered the first Siamese fiction in prose. The author, wanting to present his fictional work as history, conformed to historical tradition and wrote it in prose.

The true date of The World can be established by internal evidence. First, the poetic portion consists of Sunthọn (Phû)-type klọn suphâp. Second, the description given of the various races of the world is strikingly similar to that on the walls of Wat Phra Chétuphon. Third, interestingly, when talking about the languages of the various countries, the said that "Taleng Phâk is farang" (the language of the people of Lower Burma is European) -an apparent reference to Britain's annexation of Lower Burma in 1826.[82] And fourth, although The World is pure fiction, its author describes the world in which he lived in a most realistic way, and not like the world of Sukhôthai. Some sections of this book were written

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80) ibid.: ๙.
81) ibid.: 158
82) The World: 3

almost in imitation of the Râmkhamhèng inscription. For example, describing Phra Ruang's royal activities, the author said:-

> Above all, His Majesty has faith in the religion, and has promoted Buddhism so that it will last and prosper forever. He sets his mind on all kinds of charity, donating the royal alms for the benefit of the Triple Gem, the various monasteries, the Law, the Saṅgha, and the people everyday, every month, and every year. He installed a mahâthéra well-versed in the Law of the Religion as the Supreme Patriarch, who oversees the town-dweller monks and the forest-dweller monks. He appoints many senior monks to ecclesiastical ranks in both the khanthathura[83] and Wipatsanâthura[84] divisions. The king gives them the four 'requisites' and invites all the monks in both divisions to disseminate the religious message and persuade all his subjects, male and female, to observe the precepts for their own benefit in both this life and the next existence, so that Buddhism will not decline so soon. Besides, His Majesty also pays homage to the Brahmans who practise the way of Brahma strictly. He offers them rewards and shows them respect. He consults with them about good omens and bad omens that befall the kingdom.
>
> His Majesty has a kind heart because he knows the Law of Impermanence. He gives alms to the elderly, the sick, and the bereaved. His Majesty gives them food and clothes everywhere in his kingdom. ...
>
> The Great City of Sukhôthai is full of heavenly bliss. It is like a Celestial City. The princes, the noblemen, the courtiers, the saṅgha, the merchants, and the subjects, all are loyal to the king and praise

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83) A religious sect whose members devote themselves to the study of Buddhist texts as a means of enlightenment.

84) Monks in this Buddhist sect concentrate on meditation as a means leading to enlightenment.

> him for his kindness. They pray for His Majesty's good health and happiness.[85]

The World was probably written between 1834 and 1840. As its subject matter is life in the court of Phra Ruang, and its aim moral preaching to court ladies in the Inner City of the Grand Palace, The World must have been written by someone who knew court life well. Oral sources say that Râmâ III wrote one chapter so that he could criticize indirectly the decline in court decorum amongst the ladies of the Inner City. This could be the chapter in which Phra Sîmahôsot, the narrator's father, asks Lady Sîčhulâlak, his daughter, to explain how she should behave, once she has been presented to the king.[86] Given the realism of the story, one would presume that the author, whoever he (or she) is, wanted to present Râmâ III, a devout Buddhist king, in the light of Phra Ruang of ancient Sukhôthai.

The setting of The World is supposed to be hinterland Sukhôthai; but in fact the author appears to be describing the bustling port-city of Bangkok, when he says:-

> All the merchants, within and without the kingdom, who come to trade at the Great Celestial City of Sukhôthai, carry their commodities in all kinds of vessels, steamboat and junks.[87]

There is evidence to suggest that the author of The World was in fact ignorant of the tamnân tradition concerning the Phra Ruang myth, especially when he mistakingly refers his readers to the further history of this legendary king

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85) The World: 28-30
86) Prince Damrong, op.cit.
87) The World: 10-11

in the Tamrap Châmmathéwîwong, instead of the Jinakālamālī or Sihiṅganidāna.[88] But, he certainly had a wider vision of the real world than most people. No longer did he believe in the exclusivity of the Buddhist world. It was perhaps its loss already of Lower Burma and Ceylon to the Europeans that prompted the author of this work to state that:-

> Of all the countries, big and small, in the world, there exist only a few countries where the Religion of the Buddha still flourishes; in other places Buddhism has declined. Only one-tenth or two-tenths of all the countries are now with a Buddhist king and Buddhist subjects. The rest, nine-tenths or so, belong to the mitchâthitthi, "Those who hold false beliefs", who believe in other religious teachers.[89]

The author's genuine concern for the decline of Buddhism must be understood against the activities of Protestant missionaries in the 1830s. But a great degree of religious tolerance is also displayed by the author of this work, when he talks of non-Buddhist mitchâthitthi, who "build their own places of worship". "The Muslims and Europeans", the author says, are allowed to "build their mosques and churches to practise their religion". He goes on to say that "the bâtluang [French Catholic bishop] can propagate his religion according to his tracts".[90] Ironically, the author showed signs of influence by the Christian concept of cosmogony contained in the Bible, because he maintained that at the beginning of world-systems all human beings spoke the same language.[91]

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88) ibid.: 31; For these tamnân histories see Chapter I above.
89) ibid.: 9
90) ibid.: 22
91) ibid.: 2

It is generally accepted that, as early as the 13th century, the time of Phra Ruang and Râmkhamhèng, no known Europeans had yet arrived in South-East Asia, and there could not have been any American, Dutchmen, Portuguese, or Englishmen in Sukhôthai. Nor could there have been cannons mounted on the battlements of that city. These anacronisms conclusively prove that The World is no more than a fake. We learn much more from it of the history of the early Bangkok period than that of Sukhôthai. Although the author was inspired by by revived interest in the history of ancient Sukhôthai, his work was a third-reign expression of the Indian-derived conception of sovereignty in the traditional world of South-East Asia. For example, the author expounded his theory to his readers as follows:-

> And if a great king, who possesses immense power and commands brave soldiers and strategists in the art of war, capable of destroying his enemies from all directions, builds up enough strength, and is well supplied with warships, war animals such as horses and elephants, and provisions, he will be able to attack all countries, big and small, which are inferior in the number of soldiers, and in capacity to his kingdom. The feeble countries become his dependencies, and his kingdom expands in this manner. This is why a great independent country can have subjects who speak two, three, four, or five different languages. There are many great independent countries in the world...
>
> If the subjects of two independent kings come into contact with one another, and the two sovereigns are powerful and supported by belligerent ministers, they are bound to covet the other's treasure and territory. They will wage war against each other, which will last for generations. Merchants on both sides

> cannot trade, and all other countries know that they are at war.[92]

Nevertheless, he went on to say that independent kings could maintain a friendly relationship:-

> On the other hand, some independent countries have only two or three tributary states, while others have more than ten dependencies. The independent countries may be near or far away from each other, but if the sovereigns of these countries act royally, they should foster friendly intercourse with the other side by sending gift-bearing envoys to one another, regardless of the difference in race and language. If this is done, the independent countries will prosper.[93]

The author of The World was referring to Siam's relations with her tributaries, which was justified on the grounds that Siam was a stronger country. As regards the war that had dragged on for generations, the author was perhaps alluding to the contention between the independent kings of Siam, Burma, and Vietnam. However, the call for independent kings to foster friendship rather than wage war with each other sounded the death-knell of the concept of cakravartin, or "universal monarch", asserting such authority where necessary by force, because, in the eyes of the author, the Siamese king could not realistically claim that status.[94] With the presence of the British in the south and west, and unified non-Theravada Buddhist Vietnam in the east, it was difficult for the Siamese élite not to recognize that they had to accommodate other

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92) ibid.: 6-7
93) ibid.: 8
94) Cf. Nidhi Aeusrivongse, "Lôk Khong Nâng Nopphamât" (The World of Nâng Nopphamât), WT, 9, 1 (Jul.-Sep. 1979): 21-2

independent kings or countries with different religions. The World of Lady Sîčhulâlak reflected the fact that people had grown tired of unceasing wars, and it voiced perhaps the mercantileclass's feelings, because, had the independent countries been at peace,

> the saṅgha, the nuns, the brahmans, and all the subjects will live happily. Merchants and clients will be able to conduct their business quite conveniently, and without any misfortune. The country will be full of all commodities, gold and silver. The people of all nations will have only admiration for the king and come to him for comfort and protection.[95]

The World of Lady Sîčhulâlak, written in an autobiographical form, has a novel-like character that distinguishes it from Princess Narin's Mémoir, which had been written earlier in the third reign, and is a true historical account. But if The World is truly the first real Siamese fiction ever to have been written in stylized prose rather than in verse,[96] it is a work that reflects both the writer's tamnân conception of Siam's remote past, stimulated by the discovery of the two Sukhôthai inscriptions, and a sense of realism, which was a new feature of early 19th-century Siamese literature. However, until recently, it was despised by serious historians and ignored by traditional literary critics, despite the fact that it was "history" of the third-reign generation, and represented a new tradition in the writing of pseudohistory,

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95) The World, op.cit.
96) Nidhi, op.cit.: 11; Nidhi's "Lôk Khong Nâng Nopphamât" is as yet the only serious study on The World of Lady Sîčhulâlak in some detail. He sees it as marking a new burgeoning phase of Thai intellectuality because its author virtually abandoned the myth of the Traiphûm cosmography.

whose subject matter was not confined to episodes from the various Chinese Dynastic Histories, but derived from an indigenous source.

IV

The Passing of the "Traiphûm" World-View

In the previous section I have discussed the impact of Mongkut's discovery in 1833 of the Sukhôthai inscriptions on the Siamese literary scene. Significantly, the "golden age" of Sukhôthai was discovered not on the basis of a vague tamnân history, but on epigraphic evidence. The World of Lady Si-čhulâlak dramatizes this new "past" in a most effective way, and it was the first work dealing with pre-Ayutthayâ history that was not written in the tamnân format. Evidently, the author of The World was among the first Siamese to reject the traditional world-view of life and the universe. The renewed contact with the West in the third reign had paved the way for leading Siamese intellectuals to acquaint themselves with Western ideas, and before long the intellectual impact of the West was to shake the basis of the Traiphûm world-view, upon which the notion of tamnân historiography was based.

It is believed that Buddhist cosmography, which is an aspect of Theravada Buddhist philosophy, formed the core of Siamese religious instruction from the fourteenth century. The Siamese belief in cosmography derived principally from a religious treatise entitled Tebhūmikathā. It is commonly known as the Traiphûm Phra Ruang, or "Phra Ruang's Exposition on the Three Worlds", because it is reckoned to have been

compiled from the Pali commentaries by King Lithai of Sukhôthai in A.D. 1345.[97]

It is a moot point when the Traiphûm was originally written.[98] It is most likely that the original work, probably dating from the Sukhôthai period, had been interpolated here and there in the Ayutthayâ period before it was lost during Phrachâo Tâk's reign (1767-1782). The only extant copy today of the so-called Traiphûm Phra Ruang was copied by a monk named Phra Mahâ Chuâi in C.S. 1140 (A.D. 1778).[99] It is written in Khmer, and has a narrative style so distinctive of the Sukhôthai period, except the Pali exordium, which, according to Prince-Patriarch Wachirayân, was added later.[100] Nevertheless, its existence was apparently not known to Râmâ I, because the king, upon his accession in 1782, called an assembly of learned monks and Pali scholars and commissioned them to recompile this sacred book in 1783. The result of their concerted effort was a new Buddhist cosmography entitled Traiphûm Lôkka Santhân, "A Description of the Three Worlds".[101] Râmâ I is said to have reviewed the new Traiphûm in c. 1802/3, and been dissatisfied with it. Subsequently he ordered its revision, which was entrusted to head of the royal pundits,

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97) Craig J. Reynolds, "Buddhist Cosmography in Thai History, with Special Reference to Nineteenth-Century Culture Change", JAS, 35, 2 (Feb. 1976): 206

98) ibid.: 206-8; Michael Vickery, op.cit.: 275-84; Prasert na Nagara, "Kân Chamra Prawattisât Sukhôthai" (A New Look at the History of Sukhôthai) in Phon-ngân Khonkhwâ Prawattisât Thai: 34-6

99) Prince Damrong, "Introduction", Fine Arts Dept., Traiphûm Phra Ruang, Bangkok: Khurusaphâ, 1963: 5

100) SS, 13,: 2

101) ibid.

Phrayâ Thammaprîchâ, who was assisted by Phra Phutthakhôsâčhân.[102] The revised edition, which is shorter than the original, was then called Traiphûm Lôkka Winichai, "An Exposition of the Three Worlds".[103] As no more Traiphûm were to be compiled, the Traiphûm Lôkka Winichai was to become the most authoritative edition in the early Bangkok period.

The word "Traiphûm" means "Three Lands" or "Three Worlds". The Buddhist concept of Traiphûm is based on a cosmographical scheme that divides the universe into three worlds: (1) the world of formless, insensate brahma deities; (2) the world of insensate brahma deities still retaining form; and (3) the world of all beings still conditioned by sensation and desire as well as form.[104] There are said to be thirty-one levels, 4 in the upper world, 16 in the middle world, and 11 in the lower world, in the entire scheme. The different levels in this cosmological scheme are tied to the gradings by merit all creatures of the universe are supposed to have. Whether one climbs up the Traiphûm hierarchy, or moves down the scale, depends on one's good or bad kamma in the present existence. But the law of impermanence makes it imperative that:-

> All creatures who are born in the Traiphûm, no matter whether they are a cakravartin, an Indra, or a brahma, cannot live and enjoy their wealth and exalted rank forever. They are bound for destruction and bereavement. Indras and brahmas whose store of merit has

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102) Reynolds, op.cit.: 60-1
103) SS, 13, op.cit.
104) Traiphûm: 1
Reynolds, op.cit.: 204

> been exhausted have to travel back and forth along the unending path of the Three Worlds.[105]

Over the centuries, the Traiphûm provided an important source of reference for Thai artists and poets. Mural paintings illustrate scenes of blissful Heavens and horrific Hells described vividly in the Traiphûm. Despite its Hinduistic content, the Traiphûm served a Buddhistic purpose of reminding Buddhists of the reward they could aim for in the next life should they observe the Buddhist precepts, and not to commit sinful acts. The Traiphûm cosmography was a fascinating subject even at the time when Anna H. Leonowens was teaching King Mongkut's children in the 1860s. The royal children had a detailed knowledge of celestial geography that amazed their English governess, and whenever a difference of opinion arose amongst them with regard to specific details, they would refer to the Traiphûm Lôkka Winichai, which settled all the questions about the three realms of the cosmos.[106]

However, it is the description of the human world that is of interest to us. The Siamese believed that the human world was at the fifth level from bottom of the lower world. At the centre of this world sits Mount Meru (Sumen in Siamese) on top of three pedestal-like mountains. Mount Meru, on top of which in turn is situated God Indra's abode, is surrounded by seven rivers and seven mountain ranges of gigantic size. Farther away from the last mountain range is a vast ocean of 30 leagues width encircled at the outer

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105) Traiphûm: 256-7

106) Anna H. Leonowens, Siamese Harem Life, London: Arthur Barker, ltd., 1873, reprinted 1952: 198

extremity by a cosmic wall high as 82,000 leagues. Four islands or continents are floating on this vast ocean. Jambudīpa, our continent, is situated to the south of Mount Meru, and is said to be supported by a mythological fish named Anon. The three other human continents are believed to be inhabited by those who have already attained a higher plane of spiritual development then the human beings of Jambudīpa. According to the Traiphûm, the world is flat, and the sun and the moon can take three orbiting routes over the sky from the cosmic wall to Mount Meru, the centre of the universe, depending upon the time of the year. Of all the four continents, Jambudīpa is the largest, measuring 100,000 leagues wide and 300,000 leagues in circumference, but much of it is covered by water and wild forest. Human beings are said to be confined to two sections of the island: Matchimaprathet (Pal.= Majjhimadesa), "Middle Land", and Patčhantaprathet (Pal.= Paccantadesa), "Outer Land". As its name suggests, Matchimaprathet is placed in the centre of Jambudīpa, and said to consist of 16 great cities. It is in the Middle land only that brahmas, Buddhas, arahats, and cakravartins can be reborn.

The Traiphûm "geography" was originally a crude carto-graphy of the Indian sub-continent. The 16 great cities are a development of the 16 mahājanapada of ancient India, which included amongst others Arimaddana, Ayodhya, Champa, Kamboja, and Kosambi. Mainland South-East Asia constitutes the periphery of Jambudīpa, or Patčhantaprathet, but the decline of Buddhism in India after the eighth century A.D.,

and the rise of Theravada Buddhist literature in Burma in the eleventh century A.D., provided a basis for a second India to be conceived and imposed upon the countries of South-East Asia, especially through the religious chronicles.[107] For centuries, the Siamese believed that Siam was in Jambudīpa, or at least an extension of it. Contact with the West in the seventeenth century may have widened the Siamese vision of the world outside India, South-East Asia, China and Japan, but the Europeans then failed to really impress the Siamese with their superior technology. French missionaries at Ayutthayâ reported in 1730 that King Bǫrommakôt, then Prince of the Front Palace (Wang Nâ), asked them for a world map hoping to find the mountain "où ils assurent que sont tous leur paradis: montagne si élevée, disent-ils, qu'elle passe au dessus de tous les cieux".[108] What Bǫrommakôt was trying to find was Mount Meru, the centre of the whole Traiphûm geography.

But the new contacts with the West during the third reign, paved the way for the introduction by Protestant missionaries of modern scientific knowledge into Siam. The propagation methods of the Protestant missionaries in the early 1830s alarmed the Siamese court because they involved distributing religious tracts to the people.[109] Later,

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107) See Chapter I of this thesis.

108) Quoted in Busakorn, The Ban Phlu Luang Dynasty: 255-6

109) Suphannî Kânčhanatthiti, "Botbât khǫng American Mitchannârî nai Prathet Thai" (Thai Rôle of American Missionaries in Thailand) in Khwâm Samphan Rawâng Thai Kap Saharat Amérikâ, "A History of American-Thai Relations", Bangkok, 1976: 33

their medical achievements won over the Siamese élite so that the missionaries were called Mǫ, or 'Doctor', and not Bât-luang, a term used to describe Catholic "priests". As most Siamese always disdained the religious teachings of the mitchâthitthi, the evangelical efforts of the Protestant missionaries were not so rewarding as they might have expected, although their dispensaries could hardly cope with the demand for modern medicine brought in from the West.[110)]

It was through the American missionaries that some members of the Siamese ruling élite began to acquire knowledge of applied science. Foremost among Westernized Siamese intellectuals were Prince Chuthâmanî, his brother Prince-Monk Mongkut, and the Bunnâk half-brothers, Chuang and Kham. The greatest motive driving this small group to Western learning was the awareness of the superiority of the Western powers, and the modern technology they learned from the missionaries. By the late 1830s, Bangkok had acquired a cosmopolitan outlook, and the Siamese ruling élite could mix freely with the Westerners. As a result, the Siamese knew a great deal more about the outside world. The Poem Describing the Peoples of the World (Khlông Phâp Khon Tângdâo), which was engraved on the walls of Wat Phra Chétuphon in 1837, gives a list of 32 races known to the Siamese.[111)] The author of the World of Lady Sǐchulâlak also describes the 32 languages of 32 nations.[112)] These two lists differ slightly, but significantly, they both

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110) Donald C. Lord: 72-5

111) PSČ/WPC: 695-711

112) The World: 3-5; Nidhi, op.cit.: 19-20

represented a change in the Siamese world-view. Phra Yânpariyat, who wrote three poems describing Dǫdchi (Dutch), Rût Pîtasabâk (Petersburg, Russia) and Rût (Russia), implied that he derived them from having "heard them /the missionaries/ say that...".[113] The World.. also mentions "Rût" (Russia). Obviously, the knowledge of the outside world and modern geography was transmitted from the missionaries to the Siamese élite. Western observers in the third and fourth reigns expressed a great deal of admiration for Prince Chuthamani, 'Second King' Pinklâo, who showed an intense interest in Western learning. George B. Bacon, who had an audience with him in 1857, called him "one of the most remarkable men in the world". Describing the Second King's study, he said it:-

> was decorated with engravings, maps busts, statuettes. The bookcases were filled with well-selected volumes, handsomely bound. There were, I remember, various encyclopedias and scientific works... There were two copies of Webster's quarto dictionary, unabridged... On the table lay a recent copy of the London Illustrated News to which the king is a regular subscriber, and of which he is an interested reader. There was in it, I remember, a description, with diagrams, of some new invention of fire-arms, concerning which he wished my opinion, but he knew much more about it than I did.[114]

The Second King was perhaps the first Siamese to learn to read, write, and speak English fluently, and his quest

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113) PSK/WPC: 702

114) George B. Bacon, Siam: The Land of the White Elephant as it Was and Is, New York: Charles Scribner's Son, 1889: 101

for scientific gadgets and equipment from Europe and America was well known. But he was not untypical of a small group of the newly emerging Westernized Siamese intellectuals. King Mongkut was not to be outdone by his younger brother. During his twenty-seven years as a monk, Mongkut's preoccupation was with Buddhist affairs, as leader of a reformist sect, the Thammayut, attempting to bring orthodoxy back to the Siamese sangha.[115] But at the same time Mongkut also had a curiosity for things Western. He was a good linguist, and from Jesse Caswell and Bishop Pallegoix, he acquired the knowledge of English, French, and Latin. Jesse Caswell, the American missionary, noted Mongkut's unremitting effort and enthusiasm to learn.[116] Mongkut is said to have been a generalist, whose intellectual pursuits covered a variety of subjects ranging from natural science, geography, astronomy, mathematics, to politics, history and Christianity.[117] Krommaluang Wongsâ, a half-brother of Mongkut's, was an expert in Siamese herbal medicine, but he was anxious to learn modern medical treatment from the American missionaries, and did not hesitate in prescribing the use of Western pharmaceutical products.[118] The Bunnâk brothers, Chuang and Kham, were also well-disposed towards the missionaries. In 1835, remarkably, Chuang was the first Siamese naval engineer to build a steam-boat patterned after the Western model in

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115) For an excellent treatment of the subject see Craig J. Reynolds, The Buddhist Monkhood in Nineteenth-Century Thailand: 83-90

116) W.L. Bradley, "Prince Mongkut and Jesse Caswell", JSS, 54, 1 (Jan. 1966): 36-7

117) Wilson, op.cit.: 228

118) K.E. Wells, Prawattisât Protestant nai Prathet Thai, "A History of the Protestants in Thailand", 1958: 14-5

Siam. It was a talent well-appreciated by Râmâ III, who ordered him to build some other steam-boats for royal service.[119]

Unlike the Japanese of the same period, Siamese Buddhists hardly thought that Christianity could successfully undermine Buddhist teaching.[120] With the exception of Prince Chuthâmanî, the Siamese intellectuals were anyhow staunch supporters of Buddhism, and Mongkut, when abbot of Wat Bǫwǫnraniwet, showed his confidence in Buddhism by allowing Christian missionaries to propagate their religion in the grounds of his monastery.[121] The Siamese élite saw religious and worldly affairs as separate issues, accepting that Buddhists could learn worldly things from a Christian missionary, and at the same time ridiculing his religious faith.

But the Siamese élite could not defend the shortcomings of their traditional approach to worldly matters. Scientific inquiry, based on systematic observations and repeated experiments, had proved to have concrete results, whereas the traditional Siamese epistemology, much influenced by Buddhist-Hinduistic philosophy, was based almost entirely on speculation. The new awareness of the outside world, and the newly acquired scientific knowledge, combined to undermine the Traiphûm world-view. Again, we turn to The World of Lady Sîčhulâlak. The author of this work no longer mentioned

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119) Donald C. Lord, op.cit.: 80-1; Thiphâkǫrawong, Dynastic Chronicle of the Third Reign: 358
120) Reynolds, "Buddhist Cosmography..": 219
121) Dàmrong, Prince, Khwâm Songčham, "Autobiography", Bangkok, 1971: 96

Mount Meru as the centre of the universe.[122] A severe misconception of world geography was still presented there, but a new element, Sakon, "universal", was added to Jambudīpa to cover also the races beyond Jambudīpa, which the author later described. In fact, "Sakonla Jambudīpa" was in the eyes of the author a wider world. A distinction was being made between India (Matchimaprathet), Ceylon (Langkâ), and Siam (Patčhantaprathet).[123]

One of the most interesting books of the fourth reign is the Nangsŭ Sadèng Kitčhânukit, "A Book Explaining Various Things", written and published in 1867 by Čhâophrayâ Thiphâ (Kham Bunnâk). Then the most up-to-date textbook on science, geography, and commparative religion, it put another nail into the Traiphûm world-view. Previously, in 1863, Čhâophrayâ Thiphâ, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, had impressed his Western visitors, the German traveller, Adolf Bastian and Henry Alabaster of the British Consulate (late of Siamese Government service), with his scepticism of parts of the Pali canon. He concluded that the Jātakas were only fables, and with regard to the plausibility of the famous Pali text, Milindapanhā, "The Questions of King Milinda", the Čhâophrayâ dismissed the claim that Nāgasena, the learned monk in c.500 B.E., could have descended from brahma heavens.[124] It was the first time that a member of the Siamese élite had openly repudiated Buddhist myths that had provided the basis for the tamnân history for hundred of years. In Kitčhânukit,

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122) Nidhi, op.cit.: 19
123) The World: 2-3
124) Reynolds, op.cit.: 213

Châophrayâ Thiphâ set out to explain two subjects in particular: natural science and religions. It is stated right at the beginning that:-

> The author has a kind heart and concern for the younger generation, because he fears that the children will be quite ignorant. Although they go to the monastery for their education or receive tuition at home, they are taught by their teachers to read the primers, religious texts, and some other kinds of books. I do not think that those books are of good value. The primers are helpful, but other books are of a sensual nature rather than edifying. They do not add to the minors' wisdom. What adults have been teaching children is rather nonsensical, such as "Oh! Pretty Moon, may I have rice and curry nice, may I have a copper ring for my little girl's hand to cling". There are ditties of this same sort in the teaching, so that the children lack intelligence. I propose to explain the fundamentals of the worldly and religious matters... so that literate minors can read this book instead of the religious texts or dramatic plays.[125)]

Following the bold statement quoted above, Kitčhânukit is presented in the form of question and answer. When dealing with natural phenomena, Châophrayâ Thiphâ often dismissed the Traiphûm myths; for instance, rain falls not because the rain-making deities venture out of their abodes, or because a great Nāga (serpent) thrashes its tail, but because of winds that suck out water from the clouds. Other things such as diseases, earthquakes, comets, eclipses, high tides and low tides are treated by the Châophrayâ in a similar way.[126)]

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125) Thiphâkorawong, Châophrayâ, Nangsŭ Sadèng Kitčhânukit, Bangkok: Khurusaphâ edition, 1971: 1-2; Cf. Henry Alabaster, The Wheel of Law, London, 1871: 4

126) Reynolds, op.cit.: 215

He pointed out that although the Traiphûm says that the earth is flat, in fact it is spherical and orbits around the sun.[127] According to Châophrayâ Thiphâ, the Buddha was omniscient, and he saw no advantage of prescribing any cosmographic formula, because it would not be conducive to his disciples' mental development. The Traiphûm literature was only an accretion to the Pali text.[128]

The decline of the Traiphûm world-view had the effect of demythologizing the traditional concept of the exemplar king, cakravartin, or "universal monarch".[129] In fact, influenced perhaps be his discovery of the Sukhôthai inscriptions, Mongkut's kingship was inspired more by the so-called "Phǫ-Khun" paternalism of the Râmkhamhèng type. In 1853, Mongkut decided to reintroduce the dîkâ (petition) proceedings in which his subjects could present a petition to him in person.[130]

The preoccupation of the Siamese ruling class with Western learning contributed in the fourth reign to the decline of Siamese literature and arts. No Siamese classic was produced during Mongkut's reign, although a book-trade began in 1862, when Dan Beach Bradley, an American missionary printer, paid B.400 for Mǫm Râchôthai's poetic travelogue, Nirât Lǫndǫn, an account of the journey of the Siamese embassy to Europe in 1857.[131] Its popularity resulted from pub-

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127) Thiphâkǫrawong, op.cit.: 82 et passim
128) ibid.: 99-101
129) Reynolds, op.cit.: 217
130) "Prakât Rû'ang Thawâi Dîkâ C.S.1215" (Decree Regulating the Presentation of Petition in A.D. 1853) in Prachum Prakât Ratchakân Thî 4 B.E. 2394-2404, "Collection of Decrees Issued in the Fourth Reign, A.D. 1851-1861", Cremation volume for Phra Mahâ Phôthiwongsâyân, 1968: 47
131) Plû'ang, op.cit.: 405

lic curiosity in the world outside Siam. In this transitional period, the Siamese ruling class was outward-looking rather than inward-looking. In the field of historical writing, an attempt was made to revise the Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ at the request of Sir John Bowring, British envoy to Siam in 1855. It was indicated in Mongkut's correspondence to Sir John Bowring later in the year, that the king himself, and his half-brother, Krommaluang Wongsâ, were responsible for the new revised chronicle.[132] In the same letter, Mongkut asked for some French records concerning the Ayutthayan embassy to Paris in the reign of King Nârâi (1656-88), because "it is said one of our ancestors had been head". He also criticized quaintly the Siamese records for unreliability.

> There is the detail or particular statement written here, said to be statement of that embasshy on return from France; but all styles and statements are not in our satisfaction for believe, as it is very exaggerated from the facts of truth, and very opposed to geographical knowledges which we know now to be true facts of the world, as the author of the said statement of the Siamese embasshy upon the said time must have thought that none of Siam would not go to see France country again![133]

King Mongkut was of course referring to the passages of Somdet Phra Wannarat's Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ compiled in Râmâ I's reign. It was his awareness of the authoritativeness of the sources and their anachronisms that distinguished Mongkut from traditional court historians. In 1855, for example, Mongkut ridiculed a Burmese minister,

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132) Sir John Bowring, The Kingdom and People of Siam, II,: 444
133) ibid.: 445

who sent a letter to the Siamese Patriarch, for not realizing that Machimaprathet was India, and for trying to blindly claim ancient Indian ancestry for the king of Burma.[134] Siam had given up her Traiphûm cosmology, and Mongkut felt obliged to criticize the ignorant Chinese for still believing in their "cosmology (false Chinese geography)"[135] -a notion that placed the Chinese empire at the centre of the universe.

As the king presiding over the full opening of Siam to Western intercourse, consequent upon the Bowring Treaty with Britain in 1855, and its various 'unequal' counterparts with other Western powers thereafter, Mongkut had little time to spare for historical writing. He sponsored the Siamese translation of Cambodia's Nong Chronicle presented to him by the king of Cambodia in 1855. Two years later, a version of the Mon Chronicles was also translated into Siamese and known as the Phongsâwadân Phamâ-Râman. Not long afterwards, Mongkut wrote a brief history of Siam for foreigners, and it was called Brief Notices of the History of Siam, which was published in the Chinese Repository. Interestingly, it contains some information not found in the later official textbooks.[136]

Two of Mongkut's works were written as a direct result of the change in the Siamese world-view and the Western impact. Both his Prakât Rû'ang Râtchathût Pai Charern Thâng Phrarâtcha Maitrî, "Royal Proclamation on the Despatching of a Siamese Embassy to Foreign Countries", and Phongsâwadân Khamen

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134) Thiphâkorawong, Dynastic Chronicle of the Fourth Bangkok Reign: 160
135) G. Coedès, (comp.), "English Correspondence of King Mongkut", JSS, 21 (1928): 130
136) See Appendix A in Bowring, opcit.: 341-63

Yâng Yo, "Abridged Khmer Chronicle", had some political implications with regard to Siam's foreign relations. The Royal Proclamation is a lengthy document outlining the traditional relationship between Siam and China, which was based on the former sending tribute-bearing missions to the Chinese court every third year. Mongkut had suspended tributary relations with China in 1853, and the Royal Proclamation was made to that effect. Mongkut regarded Siamese kings sending tribute in the past as "ignorant and greedy" in sacrificing their prestige for trading privileges.[137] Mongkut argued that the Chinese emperor looked disdainfully on other peoples as barbarians, and treated all other countries as China's dependencies, notwithunderstanding the fact that the Chinese court could never exert political control in any of their supposed tributary states.[138] But underlying this statement was the feeling amongst the Siamese ruling class that China was anyhow no longer the dominant power in the region, and thus sending further Siamese embassies to China would be anachronistic and out of place. With the crumbling of royal monopolies in Siam, and internal disturbances in China, the

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137) Mongkut, King, "Prakât Rû'ang Râtchathût Pai Charern Thâng Phrarâtcha Maitrî" in Prachum Prakât Ratchakân Thî 4 Phâk Pakinnaka, "Collection of Decrees and Proclamations Issued in the Fourth Reign, Miscellaneous, Part 1", Cremation volume for the funeral of Thâo Songkandân, 1924: 62-5

138) ibid.: 74; This statement is confirmed by modern research, and with a few exceptions, the Chinese claim of sovereignty over other countries was a sham. See useful articles in John K. Fairbank, (ed.), The Chinese World Order, Harvard University Press, 1968, especially Wang Gungwu's "Early Ming Relations with Southeast Asia: A Background Essay": 34-62

royal trade connection with China was just no longer profitable.[139]

The Abridged Khmer Chronicle, which has been published in the Prachum Phongsâwadân, "Collected Chronicles", Part 71, Is believed to have been compiled by King Mongkut in c.1863/4.[140] Its strange feature is that all dates in the Siamese text are expressed in the Christian Era as well as in conventional Thai fashion, "which suggests the Thai version specifically was drawn up for the use of foreigner".[141] It must be seen in the context of Franco-Siamese argument pertaining to the subject of Siamese sovereign rights over Cambodia.

In August 1863, a treaty was signed between France and the king of Cambodia by which a French protectorate over Cambodia was established, effectively terminating Siam's political influence in that kingdom. The Abridged Khmer Chronicle was written from the Siamese point of view, and transmitted to the French Minister of the Navy and the Colonies, Count Chasseloup-Laubat, by the Siamese Consul in Paris, A. Gréhan, in early 1864.[142] The reason for the provision of this document to the French authorities was the hope that "it might be possible either to prevent or revise the French Protectorate over Cambodia, a country which the Siamese regarded as a vassal state."[143] The secret

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139) Suebsaeng, Sino-Siamese Tributary Relations: 310-4
140) Milton Osborne and D.K. Wyatt, "The Abridged Cambodian Chronicle: A Thai Version of Cambodian History", FA, 22, No. 193 (1968): 190
141) ibid.: 191
142) ibid.: 191, 196
143) ibid.: 191

treaty arranged in December 1863, by Mongkut and King Norodom of Cambodia, may have played a crucial part in spurring Mongkut to try to save an apparent lost cause, and to counter claims by contemporary French historians.

Much of the content of the Abridged Khmer Chronicle concentrates on the recent history of Cambodia. Mongkut highlighted the unruly character of the Cambodian race when he said:-

> As for the Cambodians, they have been a power, the country was calm, but they have not been able to remain in this state as happened in Siam and in other countries where there are Laws and Order. Although they are half civilized, the Cambodians are nevertheless half barbarian, they are naturally a mixture of good and bad.
>
> In comparison with the Siamese the Cambodians are much less civilized. In Siam there is much more order and system. The inhabitants have mores and customs even though a great number of them still live in the forest.[144]

The traditional Siamese view of foreign peoples is manifest in Mongkut's above-quoted statement. The concept of "Law and Order" and being "civilized" was perhaps a reflection of Western influence. Significantly, Mongkut used the word Chão Mû'ang, normally translated as "Governor", certainly not appropriate to an independent ruler, to describe the status of the rulers of Cambodia, which implied that Cambodia was part of the Siamese kingdom. Mongkut's persuasion did not work with the French, but historical writing in Siam by the fourth reign had begun to assume a

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144) ibid.: 192

new political rôle.

Following Râmâ I's cultural restoration, Siam reached a mature stage in the second reign, in the field of arts and literature. In the third reign the development of foreign trade and contact with the West brought in new challenges as well as inspiration. In the fourth reign, the emergence of works inspired by a sense of realism, the decline of traditional scholarship, and the demythologizing of the God-King aspect of the Siamese monarchy came about as a result of the decline of the Traiphûm world-view. In the field of history, a few works were produced in the second, third, and fourth reigns. The Royal Autograph Recension of the Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ, which was to remain the official version as late as 1913, actually represented little progress in the study of the history of Ayutthayâ. Had it been revised in the 1860s when Mongkut was acquiring foreign records[145] the outlook of this recension would have been much different. But with a greater awareness of European sources concerning Siamese history, the decline of Thai traditional historiography had begun to set in. The next generation of the Siamese élite was much more Westernized, and history was to be seen in a wider context.

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145) Thiphâkorawong, Dynastic Chronicle of the Fourth Reign: 267

Chapter IV

The Challenge of the New "Gurus" and the Genesis of "National" Historiography

I

Intellectual Background: Châophrayâ Thiphâ's Chronicle, the "R.S.103 Memorandum", and King Chulâlongkǫn

In 1867, Châophrayâ Thiphâkǫrawong (Kham Bunnâk), the fourth-reign Minister of Foreign Affairs, and a leading Siamese intellectual, produced his first famous work, Kitčhânukit, "A Book Explaining Various Things", which showed traces of Western influence, and marked the end of the Traiphûm world-view. The Châophrayâ was also a most distinguished chronicler of his generation, although his most important contribution, the Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Rattanakôsin, "Dynastic Chronicle of the Early Bangkok Period", was only compiled in 1869, at the beginning of King Chulâlongkǫn's reign (1868-1910), and significantly at the height of the Bunnâk power.

In 1868, after a much publicized journey to Wâ-Kǫ District to observe a full solar eclipse there on the Gulf of Siam, King Mongkut died quite unexpectedly, leaving Prince Chulâlongkǫn, a minor of 15 years old as his heir. In an assembly of members of the royal family, the nobility and senior monks, chaired by Châophrayâ Sîsuriyawong (Chuang Bunnâk), the most powerful man in the kingdom, Chulâlongkǫn was selected king, and Sîsuriyawong himself nominated Regent, or Phû Samret Râtchakân Phèndin.

Cleverly manipulating the situation to ensure the central rôle of the Bunnâk family, Sîsuriyawong unprecedentedly

proposed that the late 'Second King' Pinklâo's eldest son, Prince Yǫt, then seeking his support, be elected to succeed his father as the Wang Nâ. All the čhâo-nâi and khunnâng in the assembly were cowed into accepting it, except Prince Prâmôt (Krommakhun Wǫračhak), a half-brother of King Mongkut, who dared question it on the grounds that this would deprive the newly selected king of his traditional privilege to appoint the Wang Nâ himself. The prince was confronted by Sîsuriyawong and had to yield. Sîsuriyawong was to become the virtual ruler of Siam while King Čhulâlongkǫn was under his tutelage. To acknowledge Chuang's unusually high status, he was entitled Somdet Čhâophrayâ Bǫrom Mahâ Sîsuriyawong with absolute power of life and death. King Čhulâlongkǫn's second coronation in late 1873, when he came of age, marked the end of the Somdet Čhâophrayâ's regency, but the old statesman continued to exert his influence over the course of events in Siam until just before his death in 1883.

With Chuang having the absolute power over the affairs of the kingdom, the disgraced Prince Wǫračhak, who had just taken over the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Krom Thâ) from Čhâophrayâ Thiphâ (Kham) in the previous year, had to retire for his own safety. This turn of events led to the recall of Čhâophrayâ Thiphâ from retirement to take charge of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The amazing fact is that, in 1867, Čhâophrayâ Thiphâ had retired from office because of his deteriorating eyesight; and at the peak of the Bunnâk power he was still to compile his monumental Dynastic Chronicle of the Early Bangkok Period, in 1869, reportedly "at

the invitation of King Chulâlongkǫn", who was then aged 16. Given the fact that the Châophrayâ was the most scholarly man amongst the Bunnâk clan, it was still unusual for a high-ranking nobleman, and not a scholar-monk, a court historiographer, or a senior member of the royal family, to write a phongsâwadân history. And, whether the king liked it or not, and in the heat of the resentment over the Bunnâk manoeuvring, Châophrayâ Thiphâ was chosen as the king's spiritual adviser. His Kham Thawâi Owât 35 Khǫh, " 35 Items of Advice to the King", enumerates a list of the new king's duties and conduct in the art of government. This is obviously a text suppressed by the official historiography of later days.[1] In it, the Châophrayâ displayed his knowledge of the Chinese Histories, citing from them the good example of Chinese emperors whose kindness had endeared them to their nobility and commanded the respect of their subjects.[2] Significantly, item 2 reveals the mutual distrust between King Mongkut and the Somdet Châophrayâ Ong Yai (Dit), father of Chuang and Kham, and head of the Bunnâk family earlier in the fourth reign. According to Châophrayâ Thiphâ, King Mongkut was told by ill-intentioned courtiers that the Somdet Châophrayâ Ong Yai had planned to disthrone him, but later the king found this allegation to be groundless. Châophrayâ Thiphâ besought the new king to heed no rumours.[3] There is little doubt that the Châophrayâ's memorial was designed on behalf

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1) The fragmentary text has been published in Natthawut, Sâm Châophrayâ: 534-44

2) ibid.: 534-5

3) ibid.: 536

of the Bunnâk family to allay the young King Chulâlongkọn's suspicion of the rumours that Chuang, in imitation of Châophrayâ Sîwọrawong (later King Prâsâtthọng), his 17th-century Kalâhôm counterpart and Regent, would seize the throne for himself.

It was during Kham's one-year interlude as Phra Khang in 1869, that he supervised the compilation of the history of the early Bangkok period. Born on 1st October 1813, Châophrayâ Thiphâ was a son of the then Phrayâ Suriyawongmontrî (Dit Bunnâk), Commander of the Royal Pages Corps, early in the second reign. In the third reign Kham had entered government service, like the sons of most leading noblemen, in the Department of the Royal Pages Corps. He rose rapidly up the ladder of rank, from Nâi Phonlaphan to become Chamün Râtchâmât, Deputy-Head of the Department of the Police, towards the end of the third reign. Apparently, together with his half-brother, Phrayâ Sîsuriyawong (Chuang), he was responsible both for the enthronement of the inexperienced Prince-Monk Mongkut in 1851, and the previous downfall, in 1848, of Mongkut's enemy, the ambitious Prince Raksaronnaret (1791-1848).[4] Kham was promoted to the rank and title of Châophrayâ Rawiwong and later Châophrayâ Thiphâkọrawong early in Mongkut's reign, and was to become Siam's Minister of Foreign Affairs until 1867. During his tenure of office Châophrayâ Thiphâ had to deal with Europeans and Americans, and his acquaintances were reportedly impressed with his open

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4) Vella, op.cit.: 9-10
Cf. Thiphâkọrawong, Dynastic Chronicle of the Third Reign: 317-21

mind and power of intellectual argument.[5]

Understandably, Čhâophrayâ Thiphâ wrote the Dynastic Chronicle of the Early Bangkok Period from the Bunnâk point of view. It is often maintained that the Čhâophrayâ was the last traditional chronicler of Siam because he adhered strictly to the phongsâwadân format with its chronicular approach; but in terms of content, he showed a great deal of skill in projecting Siamese history in a wider perspective than any of his predecessors, notably when dealing with Siam's foreign relations of the third and fourth reigns, an area which had been omitted in the earlier phongsâwadân. Furthermore, the Čhâophrayâ broke with tradition in concentrating as much on the rise of his own Bunnâk family as the Čhakkrî kings' activities. When cross-checked against contemporary European records such as John Crawfurd's Journal, Dr. Richardson's Mission, and notably The Burney Papers, Čhâophrayâ Thiphâ's Dynastic Chronicle of the Third Reign is found to contain not only inaccuracies, but also obvious distortions in favour of the Bunnâk noblemen in general, and the compiler's father, Čhâophrayâ Phra Khlang (Dit) in particular. A good example of such distorition is the Čhâophrayâ's treatment of the negotiation in 1825/6 between Captain Henry Burney, the British Government of India's envoy,

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5) Prince Damrong, SS, 4,: 269; Chalong Suntharâwânit, "Wiwatthanâkân Kân Khiang Prawattisât Thai Čhâk Čhâophrayâ Thiphâkǫrawong Thúng Phračhâo Bǫrommawongther Krom Phrayâ Damrong Râchânuphâp" (The Evolution of Thai Historiography From the Times of Čhâophrayâ Thiphâ to Prince Damrong), SP, 16, 4 (Nov. 1972): 70-80

and the Siamese court. According to Burney, the Siamese court divided over the issue into two factions, one headed by Râmâ III, who was intelligent, moderate, and anxious to cultivate friendly relations with the British, and the other by the Wang Nâ Prince, who had interested southern connections, was ignorant, and opposed accommodation.[6] The Bunnâk were related to the Wang Nâ, and with him, they formed the obstructionist party. But Châophrayâ Thiphâ recorded in his Chronicle that:-

> At that time, His Majesty /Râmâ III/ had no wish to conclude an obligated treaty with Britain, but hoped to maintain a good relationship with her in the same traditional way as with Vietnam. Thus, the Wang Nâ, Krommamün Surin, Châophrayâ Phra Khlang and the Râjâ of Ligor, all 4 of them, besought the King to accept the British offer, or otherwise, there would be no peace, because the British envoys had come twice...[7]

Distortion of this kind occurred because past events were being viewed in the context of Siam's foreign policy of the fourth reign of which the compiler himself had been an advocate, and when the opening up of Siam had been the order of the day. And, how could one then expect the Châophrayâ to present his own father as an obstructionist? Prince Damrong was particularly critical of Châophrayâ Thiphâ's Dynastic Chronicle of the Third Reign.[8] It is understandable also why King Chulâlongkǫn, in 1901, commissioned Prince

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6) D.G.E. Hall, Henry Burney: A Political Biography, London: Oxford University Press, 1974: 49
7) Thiphâkǫrawong, op.cit.: 28-9
8) Prince Damrong, op.cit.

Damrong to revise Chaophrayâ Thiphâ's work, the Dynastic Chronicle of the First Reign. I shall return to this Chronicle later in this Chapter. Suffice it to say that the writing of history, a source of traditional legitimacy, had passed into the hands of a high-ranking nobleman, who seized the opportunity to write the history of the achievements of his own family.

Traditional scholarship and historiography further declined in the fifth reign, as a direct result of the greater willingness of the Siamese élite to accept Western culture and modernize Siam along Western lines. The spread of the printing press in particular, ushered in a new era of Thai intellectual history. Towards the end of the fourth reign, Protestant missionaries such as D.B. Bradley and Samuel J. Smith, had abandoned publishing Christian tracts and turned to the publication of Siamese literature, including historical documents.[9] Through their enterprise, Bangkok Siamese learned as much about the Thai literary heritage as of the history of foreign countries, translated from English into Siamese. Samuel J. Smith was to dominate the book trade in Siam until the 1880s, and as a successful publisher, he also owned the Chotmâihet Sayâm Samai (or The Bangkok Daily Advertiser), the first daily newspaper in Siam between 1868 and 1886, and several other journals and magazines.[10]

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9) D.B. Bradley was first to publish a history of Siam, Somdet Phra Wannarat's Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Si Ayutthayâ, in 1863.

10) Sukanyâ Tîrawanit, Prawat Kân Nangsüphim Nai Prathet Thai Phâitai Rabob Sombûranâyasitthirât, "History of Thai Newspapers in the Age of the Absolute Monarchy", Bangkok: Thai Watthanâphânit, 1977: 28-32

The emergence of modern journalism was an important factor in the modernizing process of Siam in the 1870s and 1880s, and especially in the development of the intellectual élite outside the princely and nobility. Two Westernized commoners, Thianwan and K.S.R. Kulâp stood out as radical thinkers in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Both made their name in the publishing world, the first Siamese to break the missionaries' monopoly of the book trade. Both were in their prime respected as the modern khru, "gurus" (teachers) because of their intellectual lectures. But above all, both epitomized the social change that was taking place in the fifth reign, brought about by the impact of the West. They were, however, controversial figures that official historiography prefers to write out of history and condemns to oblivion. They deserve our attention not only because they were anathema to the court, but also because through their writings one can better understand Siam in the fifth reign.

With regard to Thianwan and K.S.R. Kulâp and their contribution of the intellectual scene, Thianwan as a radical social critic, and K.S.R. Kulâp as a self-proclaimed historian, one has to call in question even 20th-century Thai views of history. Since the 1940s, Prince Damrong (1862-1943) has been elevated to the position of "Father of Thai History".[11] He has become in Thai circles the privotal figure of "national"

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11) This epithet was originally given Prince Damrong by Luang Wičhit (1898-1962), the most influential Thai nationalist historian and writer. See Sulak Siwarak, "Somdet Krom Phrayâ Damrong Kap Sakun Prawattisât Damrong Râchânuphâp" (Prince Damrong and His History School), Ruam Botkhwâm Prawattisât, 1, 1 (Jul. 1980): 27

history. I shall discuss later his rôle in this particular field.

King Chulâlongkọn's second full coronation in late 1873, dissolved the regency of Somdet Châophrayâ Bọrom Mahâ Sisuriyawong, but signalled the beginning of internal strife between the King and the old Regent, who still controlled the government and tried to protect the interests of the Bunnâk family. However, the gradual decline of the Bunnâk family set in properly by the early 1880s, and by the end of the decade, the king had gained complete control of the state machinery. But by the time the so-called "prince-cabinet" was launched in 1887, the future of Siam as an independent country was in jeopardy; the British had conquered the remains of Burma in late 1885, and a year previously Vietnam had fallen into French hands. At the beginning of the 1890s, the danger from the colonial powers could never have been more acutely felt. Furthermore, the tenuous relationship between Siam and her outlying provinces and dependencies left room for the intervention of foreign powers. To meet the threat of Western colonialism, the so-called Chakkrî Reformation was commenced aiming at absorbing the semi-autonomous provinces and tributary states into a unitary kingdom. But, arguably, it was not until after the Pâknâm Incident of 1893 with France, that the reform of provincial administration was set earnestly in full swing. The introduction of the Monthon Thésâphibân or "Circle Government" under the leadership of high-ranking officials appointed by Bangkok, was a task undertaken by the king's capable half-brother, Prince

Damrong Râchânuphâp who was only made Minister of the Interior in December 1894.[12]

Reading the available literature, in Thai as well as in Western languages, on the reign of King Chulâlongkọn, one is led, by the overwhelming strength of the official historiography, to believe that Siam was in a good condition through-out, politically and socially, because she had a reformist king. Indeed, in the initial stages, King Chulâlongkọn, in carrying through the Anti-slavery Act and the Council of State Act, both of 1874, must have been full of enthusiasm. The Council of State, which consisted of 20 Councillors selected from the core of the king's tight supporters, was a dismal failure as a democratic forum, for no one was prepared to open his mouth for fear of offending the king, but it served the king's purpose in placing another layer of authority over the existing bureaucracy controlled by the ex-Regent and the Bunnâk. With the passing of the Somdet Châophrayâ from the scene in 1883, and the death of the Second King in 1886, there was no longer a main rival to the royal power, as Châophrayâ Surawong (Wọn), the ex-Regent's son and successor, did not have the character of the Somdet Châophrayâ. For the first time in the history of the Bangkok period, enormous powers were concentrated in the king alone, supported by an amenable princely-dominated government, whose members

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12) I am grateful to Dr. N.J. Brailey for pointing out to me that Prince Damrong was originally appointed Minister of the North (Old Mahâtthai Department) in 1892, and did not become the Minister of the Interior (New Mahâtthai Department) until 1894.
See also Tej Bunnâk, The Provincial Administration of Siam, 1892-1915, Oxford University Press, 1977: 88, 93

owed their position directly to King Chulâlongkǫn.

Now that modern research has produced results contrary to the long-held beliefs concerning the internal development of Siam in the 1880s and 1890s,[13] one needs to have a fresh reinterpretation of Chulâlongkǫn's reign. It is obvious that, during the 1880s, the king had fallen back on traditional Siamese statecraft, and with numerous royal offspring and a hugh royal household to look after, the king even seems to have had little time for government.

In January 1885, Prince Pritsadâng (1851-1935), Siamese Minister in Paris, who had been one of King Chulâlongkǫn's favourites,[14] gathered like-minded Siamese who served in the Legations in Paris and London to discuss the contents of a memorandum to be submitted to the king at the royal request. It was signed by 11 people including Prince Sawat, Prince Naret, and Prince Sônabandit (Phitthayalâp), all half-brothers of King Chulâlongkǫn's.[15]

This so-called "R.S. 103 Memorandum" is one of the most important documents in Thai history. For the first time it used the word chât emphatically to mean "nation",

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13) N.J. Brailey, Two Views of Siam on the Eve of the Chakkrī Reformation, forthcoming; Thawīsin Sūbwatthana, "Kān Long Thun Thâng Setthakit Khǫng Châo-nâi Thai" (The Princes' Investment), Ruam Botkhwâm Prawattisât, 5 (Jun. 1982): 54-93

14) See, for example, King Chulâlongkǫn's letter dated 23 June 1875 in Natthawut, Phû Sâng Wannakam: 252-3

15) See the text of the R.S. 103 Memorandum reproduced in Chai-anan Samutthawanit and Khattiyâ Kannasût, Ekkasân Kân Mū'ang Kân Pokkhrǫng Thai, "Collection of Thai Political Documents", Bangkok, 1975: 74-5

and it was stated that Siam belonged to the Siamese people.[16] The R.S. 103 Memorandum outlined the various problems concerning Siam. The signatories pointed out that as a small nation, Siam could not defend herself against the Western powers, if the latter should decide, justly or unjustly, to impose a protectorate upon Siam, on the pretext that Siam was an uncivilized country. To rid the West of the pretext of mission-civilisatrice, it was stressed, Siam had to follow Japan's example.[17] Siam could not hope for any European country to come to her rescue in the event of a dispute with another European country, because all the Europeans believed that the people of an 'uncivilized nation' would be better off under a European colonial administration that was bound to bring social justice to the wronged.[18] Supporting their assessment, the Princes enclosed cuttings from the French newspapers that predicted that in five years' time, France would certainly impose their colonial rule on Siam.[19]

The Memorandum went on to point out that as the political situation stood, Siam should not expect to encounter the West with sweet words and a policy of conceding peripheral territories, and be let off the hook. Nevertheless, Siam, like not only Egypt, but Belgium, and Switzerland too,

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16) This was a bold statement because traditionally the King was called Phračhâo Phèndin or "Lord of the Whole Lands".

17) Chai-anan, op.cit.: 47

18) ibid.: 50

19) ibid.: 50-1

was in a favourable geographical situation, because France and England might entertain the idea of Siam remaining a buffer-state between British Burma and French Indo-China.[20] Nonetheless the only strategy that would ensure Siam's integrity and independence was to win the respect from the West in the same way as the Japanese had done.[21]

Interestingly, the petitioners thought it wrong for anyone to convince himself that Siam had achieved a great deal of progress because of some social reforms such as the abolition of slavery and the acceptance of European social etiquette.[22] Some European practices were absurdly adopted by the court, for example, the awarding of decorations. A European nation have a decoration, as a rule, to a certain distinguished person for his good deeds to the nation, but on the contrary, the Siamese court gave one to a man according to his high rank and high birth. How could one argue that this was based on the idea of justice? Even the fact that Siam had representatives in Europe, by Western reckoning, was not real evidence of Siam being a civilized nation, because the cultural changes that had taken place were only cosmetically Western.[23]

The petitioners recommended that Siam should follow the West in the introduction of constitutional monarchy to ensure that the people of Siam were ruled by a just government. They cited a Western report which criticized curruption

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20) ibid.: 54
21) ibid.: 51
22) ibid.: 55
23) ibid.: 56

in the Siamese administration and its intrinsic laxity.[24] They raised another question: "How could the West believe that the Siamese Government was able to provide justice to its people, while all matters of state were concentrated in the hands of the King and his ex-Private Secretary newly-appointed Foreign Minister, also Prince Sawat's full brother, Prince Théwawong.[25] In their opinion, the petitioners argued, further reforms had to be put in effect with these principles in mind: (1) the drafting of a constitution, because it was like "a machine that sets the state going"; (2) the elimination of corruption prevalent among functionaries; (3) the notion of freedom of expression and eqality of all before the law; (4) the further abolition of obsolete laws and customs; and (5) patriotism could be inculcated in the people only when they felt that "Siam belonged to them" and there was no longer any oppression.[26]

The reform proponents, however, stated that although they advocated a reform based on a constitution, they did not by any means insist that a European-styled parliament be introduced in Siam.[27] The "R.S. 103 Memorandum" ends beseechingly with a plea that it was the King's obligation to his country and people that a solid foundation for government reform be laid for the prosperity of Siam, not only in his reign but also in the longer term future.[28] The petitioners, according to Prince Pritsadâng, refrained from touching on polygamy for fear of upsetting the King.[29]

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24) ibid.: 59
25) op.cit.
26) ibid.: 60-1
27) ibid.: 60
28) ibid.: 73
29) See "Pritsadâng Memorandum of 1891" written by the

In his reply, King Chulâlongkọn expressed his conviction that Siam could progress a lot more if government reform was to be initiated. But with suppressed anger, he criticized the reformists for having divorced themselves from the true situation back home in Siam. He would have no hesitation stepping down from the position of absolute power and the "Premiership" of the government had the incumbent ministers not been a bunch of incompetent administrators, and the Council of State (appointed by himself of course) not degenerated into a rendezvous of non-participating members.[30] To illustrate this point, the King cited the example of Châophrayâ Phânuwong (Thuam Bunnâk), who failed to execute his duty capably, emphasizing that the Châophrayâ was a better man than the rest.[31] It was impolitic to get rid of all the ministers in the present government, for it would cause a stir among the ignorant ordinary population.

The King's reply was made after the fall of the imperially-minded Jules Ferry French Government in Paris in March 1885. The news was received with some relief by the King, who reportedly became less anxious about French pressure.[32] It was not long before the King vented his displeasure on the principal actors behind the Reform League

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disgraced Prince for Frank Swettenham about conditions in Siam in the previous decade, in Public Record Office, London, FO. 69/147

30) Chulâlongkọn, King, "Phrarâtcha Damrat Tọp Khwâmhen Khọng Phû Cha Hai Plianplèng Kân Pokkhrọng" (A Royal Reply to the "R.S. 103 Memorandum") in Chi-anan, op.cit.: 79-80

31) op.cit.

32) Pritsadâng Memorandum of 1891, FO 69/147

when he learned of the criticism levelled by its members against court customs and the practice of polygamy.[33] The King, who had 92 wives and numerous children, was of course sensitive to this sort of adverse comment. Although government reform was anticipated after the "R.S.103 Memorandum", it was not to be put into practice until 1892. Two of the King's favourite half-brothers, Princes Théwawong and Damrong, were entrusted with special missions to Europe in 1887 and 1891 respectively, and on both occasions, the Princes were also asked to study and evaluate the benefits of Western-style government.[34]

In the period between 1885 and 1893, the year of the Pâknâm Crisis, it was alleged by Prince Pritsadâng, that the Siamese Government was plagued with infighting and intrigues amongst the Princes who strove to win the King's favour, whereas the Reform League had broken up because of mutual distrust and jealousy amongst its members.[35] The King, believing that his authority was secure, and the investiture of Crown Prince Wachirunnahit in 1887, had guaranteed a smooth succession down his line, is said by his main critic to have devoted more of his time to family than state affairs.[36] A sense of foreboding was felt by certain princes, not least by Prince Phânurangsî, Minister of War and full brother of

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33) ibid.

34) Damrong, Prince, 42 Prawat Bukkhon Samkhan, "42 Biographies of Important Persons", Bangkok: Bannâkhân, 1966: 220; also his Letters of Prince Damrong on the Occasion of His Visit to Europe in 1891, Cremation volume for the funeral of M.C. Ditsânuwât Ditsakun, 1968

35) Pritsadâng Memorandum

36) ibid.: "Present State of Siam /I7", p. 44

the King, who confided to Prince Pritsadâng that:-

> We all know that it is impossible for any sane person to hope that we can maintain our independency and the question is what preference we should have. We all prefer as an ultimate result that we should be under British protection...everything is English in our country.[37]

Although the King was averse to the suggestion that he should relinquish his absolute authority, and rule like a Western monarch[38] the recommendation of the "R.S.103 Memorandum" was not entirely snubbed when the opportunity came, with the resignation of Châophrayâ Surawong, Minister of the South, and the last Bunnâk official of consequence, in 1887. The King's strategy in the late 1880s and early 1890s was to bolster the image of Siam, still largely cosmetic, in the comity of 'civilized' nations, and a great effort was constantly made by the Siamese King to cultivate close relationship with the European courts. Prince Théwawong attended the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1887, and in Germany, he presented to Wilhelm II the highest Siam Order on behalf of King Chulâlongkǫn. In 1891, the Tsarevich (future Nicolas II), in the course of a general tour of Southern and Eastern Asia, paid a visit to Siam and presented the Grand Cross of St. Andrew to King Chulâlongkǫn. This implies a connection between Mongkut's "court" politics and the famous Siamese policy of

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37) ibid.: 56-7

38) See Chai-anan, Ekkasân Kânmû'ang: 124; In refusing to step down as an absolute monarch King Chulâlongkǫn showed his concern for Siamese traditions arguing that in some Western countries constitutional monarchy was an evolutionary development demanded by the people. Such was not the case with Siam where any kind of change had to be introduced from the top.

"playing one off against another" in the nineteenth century. Prince Damrong's European tour of 1891 had the objective of sounding out how other European powers, besides France and Britain, would respond to a Siamese cry for help in the event of Franco-Siamese conflict. In Siamese reckoning, Russia, as a mighty state in Europe, could be a useful counterbalance to France and Britain. Prince Thêwawong's correspondence with Prince Damrong suggests Siam would have liked to enter into some sort of treaty of friendship with Russia.[39] And it was during this time that the Siamese Government decided not to let any power have a dominant influence over Siam. This was reflected in Prince Damrong's educational plan for the king's sons, and in a bid for international recognition, young princes were to be sent to study not only in England, but also in Germany, Denmark, and notably Russia.[40]

The Pâknâm Incident of 1893, and the subsequent loss of territory, together with a large indemnity to France, revealed the weakness of Siamese diplomacy on a grand scale. The Pâknâm Crisis also had many internal repercussions. The humiliation and dented prestige proved too much for the king, who fell seriously ill; and in 1894 in the aftermath of Pâknâm, there

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39) H.B. Smith, "Nineteenth-Century Siamese Adventures in Fringe Diplomacy", Southeast Asia, 1, 4 (1979): 293-4; Following initial talks between Prince Damrong and Arthur Vyvodtsev, Russian Consul at Singapore, in February 1891, Prince Thêwawong, in March, with the approval of the King, prepared the draft of a Declaration of Friendship between Russia and Siam to be signed by both sides during the Tsarevich's visit. It fell through because Russia wanted a Bowring-type treaty. Chaloṇg Suntharâwânit, Rutsia Kap Thai Samai Ratchakân Thî 5-6, "Russo-Siamese Relations during the Fifth and Sixth Reigns", Bangkok, 1982: 66-9

40) During his visit to Siam in 1891, the Tsarevich suggested to King Chulâlongkoṇ that one of the latter's sons be sent to Russia for education. Chaloṇg, ibid.: 109

were royal "death scares", and there was talk of another regency.[41] All affairs of state were suspended for long periods, for nobody was prepared to make any decisions. The breakdown of central government, according to R.L. Morant, Crown Prince Wachirunnahit's guardian, led to an increase in crime and disturbances in the provinces.[42] The general feeling was that it would be impossible for Siam to maintain her independence in the light of recent events.[43] King Chulâlongkǫn probably believed so. On the occasion of Prince Wachirâwut's departure for England to study there in 1893, King Chulâlongkǫn reportedly arranged for a sum of £800,000 to be transferred to England for the young prince, for the immediate future of Siam was not at all certain.[44]

The most acute problem over the future of Siam was apparently solved in 1896. France and Britain reached an agreement according to which Siam Proper was recognized as a buffer state between British Burma and French Indo-China. But it still allowed France and Britain to further nibble away at Siam's peripheral dominions. Siam was coerced to concede a large territory on the west bank of the Mekhong to France in 1902. Again in 1907, she lost Western Cambodia to France in return for the abrogation of France's jurisdiction over her Asian subjects. In 1909, a similar arrangement was made with Britain, a move initiated by the Siamese court,

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41) N.A. Battye, The Military Government, and Society in Siam, 1868-1910, Unpub. Ph.D. Thesis, Cornell University, 1974: 375-6
42) Robert L. Morant, "Memorandum on the British Legation in Bangkok", July 1894, FO 17/1223 31652
43) ibid.
44) Salao & Udom, op.cit.: 422

whereby Siam conceded the four northern Malay sultanates to Britain, and the latter agreed to give up her extra-territoriality over her non-European subjects. In between 1893 and 1909, Siam lost one-third of her territories to France and Britain, but by the end of King Chulâlongkọn's reign, the centralization process carried out by Prince Damrong was virtually completed, and Siam had become a full-fledged unitary state.

It was Western pressure that brought about the socio-political changes in Siam in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The King and the princely élite, whilst trying to preserve their traditional privileges, were aware of the implication of Western political culture. There were cries for the introduction of radical reforms such as a parliamentary system, and a selection process based on the principle of "merit" rather than "birth". With the liquidation of the Democratic Reform League, the flight abroad in 1890 of its chief exponent, Prince Pritsadâng, and the complete about-face of other of the League members, notably Prince Sawat, the younger brother of Prince Théwawong and the Queens, Sawâng and Saowaphâ, the voice of protest and demand for political reform within the ruling class disappeared almost overnight. It is at this juncture that we need to introduce into the discussion the life and works of Thianwan and K.S.R. Kulâp, the Western-inspired gurus of the fifth reign, whose contributions provide the reader with an insight into the real condition of Siam, and are crucial not only for historians but the story of the development of Thai historiography.

II

Thianwan and "The Dream of an Awakened Man"

Today, very few Thais know who Thianwan was; and as a matter of fact, Thianwan, as a radical thinker, has no place in the official historiography. The reason is that Thianwan was a commoner, and above all, the only vociferous critic of the princely government of the fifth reign. In those days, it seems, worth was judged in terms of family background rather than achievement. However, his writings are now supposed to have been an inspiration for the revolutionaries in the reigns of King Wachirâwut (1910-1925) and King Prachâthipok (1925-1935).

What we know about Thianwan comes chiefly from his Prawat Kham Klǫn, "Poetic Autobiography", and the more famous Wâduâi Khwâmfan Lamer Tèh Michai Nǫnlap, "The Dream of an Awakened Man", written towards the end of the nineteenth century. In his authobiography, Thianwan traced his ancestors back to a certain Khun Thian Wichianhong, a minor official in the court of King Nârâi (1656-88). He claimed also that the Supreme Patriarch (Sâ Putsathéwa) of the fifth reign was his maternal uncle.[45)]

Born in 1842, in the third reign, Thianwan was the son of a thrice-convicted criminal. His father died when he was still young, so he was brought up by an uncle. At the

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45) Chai-anan Samutthawanit, Chîwit Lèh Ngân Khong Thianwan Lèh K.S.R. Kulâp, "Life and Works of Thianwan and K.S.R. Kulâp", Bangkok: Rû'angsin, 1978: 20 Hereafter cited Chîwit

age of 8, he was sent to Wat Phra Chétuphon to receive instruction in Siamese and Pali from Mahâ Phum, a famous scholar-monk. There he met K.S.R. Kulâp, who was having tuition in the same monastery school. Fatherless, and having come from a broken family, Thianwan led an aimless life, and often got into trouble. His mother remarried when he was 15 years old. According to his own account, Thianwan became a reformed person under the guidance of his much admired step-father. He was ordained as a novice in the following year by Phra Sâtsanasôphon (Sâ), his uncle. After 13 months he left the novitiate to go back to live with his mother and step-father for a while. But it was not before long that he started a wandering life again travelling to the North, and at the age of 19, he left Siam in a European steam-boat for 15 months in 1861/2. Upon returning to Bangkok, he was 20 years old, the right age for becoming a monk according to Siamese custom. He was ordained at Wat Bǫwǫnraniwet by the Prince-Patriarch Pawaret Wariyâlongkǫn. He spent four rainy seasons (vassa) at that monastery until King Mongkut built a new monastery called Wat Râtchapradit for Phra Sâtsanasôphon (Sâ). Thianwan followed his uncle there, but for some unknown reason he soon decided to return to Wat Bǫwǫn. It is claimed that he was the victim of jealousy and framed for having a love affair with a court lady when he follow Sâ to perform religious ceremonies in the Grand Palace.

Disillusioned by monastic life, Thianwan decided to disrobe in 1867. Again in 1868, he left Siam and travelled in a European vessel to various parts of Asia and the Pacific.

This was the turning-point in his life, because after many years in foreign countries and Western colonies, he had acquired a great deal of knowledge of Western institutions and how things operated in the West. He was particularly interested in international laws and theology, but also he read foreign history and international politics intensively.[46]

Like K.S.R. Kulâp, Thianwan was among the few Siamese who had the best of both worlds of education, available at that time, traditional as well as Western.

Unlike most Westernized Siamese of his generation, Thianwan looked at Siam's problems almost from the Western point of view. He even adopted the Western attitude that white men were more intelligent than yellow men and yellow men were more intelligent than the Africans.[47] He believed that parliamentary democracy was an attribute of a civilized country because it was through parliament that a people could participate in the government of their country. As a political theorist, Thianwan expressed a more radical view than the princes-dominated Reform League, who presented the R.S. 103 Memorandum to King Chulâlongkǫn in 1885. As a social critic, Thianwan was averse to obsolete Siamese customs, and wanted to see them abolished by the court.[48]

Following his return to Siam in around 1871, Thianwan became an advocate of social reform. He claimed in his

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46) ibid.: 31

47) This remained his view as late as 1906, see "Ton Nangsŭ Thûn Klâo" (Draft of a Petition Presented to King Chulâlongkǫn) dated 24 January R.S. 124, reprinted in ibid;: 206

48) Thèmsuk Numnon, "Thianwan", in Fûn Adît, "The Past Rediscovered", Bangkok: Rû'angsin, 1979: 118

famous work, Wâduâi Khwâmfan Lamer Tèh Michai Nǫnlap, that back in 1872, he had presented to his princely friends and many people a comprehensive programme for the modernization of Siam, implying that he was already an "awakened" man dreaming of the day when radical reforms were to be implemented and Siam became a civilized nation. His programme consisted of 34 items covering the following subjects: social reform, modern education, reorganization of the army and the navy, political reform, and national economy.[49] If he had contemplated this programme in 1872 as he claimed, he would have been the first Siamese intellectual to publicly demand the abolition of slavery.[50] However, it is difficult to substantiate Thianwan's claim, as the Dream of an Awakened Man was only published in 1904. Many parts of it echoed actually what the missionary press had campaigned for in the 1860s, especially the attack on certain Siamese practices and customs such as polygamy, heavy gambling, bribery, and the lack of women's educational opportunity.[51] On the subject of slavery, Thianwan suggested that its abolition should be done in two stages. First, all slaves (thât) should be freed, because slavery was a social vice. Second, the government must seek means of providing them with employment, for ex-female slaves without protection and personal security would be all too willing to become wives of Chinese.[52]

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49) "The Dream of An Awakened Man" reproduced in Chîwit: 143-54

50) Chai-anan, Ekkasân, op.cit.: 140

51) Sukanyâ, op.cit.: 24; Cf. Chîwit: 64, 145

52) Chîwit: 33

Thianwan's fear of the dwindling of the native Siamese population and the domination of Chinese immigrants in Siam might have resulted from his awareness of foreign newspapers which claimed that the Siamese were already a minority in their own country.[53)]

Thianwan was very much impressed by Western culture. He gave up the Siamese habit of chewing red-limed areca nuts and betel leaves, and dressed himself like a European gentleman. He also sported a Western hair-style, and wore socks and shoes. His reason was that European food and European customs "were clean and conducive to good health".[54)]

As a writer, Thianwan had contributed to the Darunôwât, "Wise Words of the Young", a prince-owned newspaper, in the early 1870s, but his radical ideas had alienated the princes. In the royal reckoning, he was no more than a nuisance. In 1880, Thianwan wrote a memorandum entitled Praiwet Kham Nèhnam, "A Private Counsel", to M.R. Lek Siriwong ṇa Ayutthayâ, then Châomŭn Sîsǫrarak, aide to Châophrayâ Surasakmontrî (Cherm Sèngchûtô), a Reform League member, analyzing the basic differences between European countries and Siam. The gist of his argument was that Western nations prospered because intellectuals took part in the government and that ensured the promulgation of good laws.[55)] Western nations, in Thianwan's opinion, had made much more progress than Asian nations

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53) ibid.: 167; Cf. Charles Ryder Dibble, The Chinese in Thailand against the Background of Chinese-Thai Relations, Unpub. Ph.D. Thesis, Syracuse University, 1961: 128-47

54) Chai-anan, Ekkasân: 138

55) ibid.: 150

thanks to three good principles. First, the European ruling class was not only enlightened but also sympathetic towards the people. Second, the ordinary people of the West were well educated. And, erudition was crucial for any people of the world to make great strides because it was the fount of knowledge and intelligence. Third, the West had good military morale.[56] But above all, Western governments cared for their subjects, and honoured their intellectuals. Thianwan pointed out that all the countries of the Far East had the same shortcomings, namely, a lack of interest in intellectual pursuits amongst the people, and a general lethargy of the whole fatalistic nation. In Siam, the major problem was that virtually every capable person was thwarted in the attempt to introduce reform. He cited the example of Phranâi Wai (Cherm, later Châophrayâ Surasak), M,R. Lek's superior, as an honourable government official who had to experience obstacles even from his own family.[57]

Thianwan had first been arrested by the authorities for his revolutionary ideas in 1879, but had soon been released. It is understandable that when writing A Private Counsel in the following year, Thianwan chose to highlight the fact that as it existed, the law was an instrument for the government to suppress those who dared to think differently. "Anyone who wants to do good walks straight into the mouth of a tiger or a lion".[58]

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56) ibid.: 150
57) ibid.: 151-3; Thianwan did not indicate clearly in this private letter what kind of situation Phranâi Wai found himself in in 1880. A capable soldier and one of the King's favourites, he was later in 1884 accused by Prince Prachak of plotting a rebellion. This led to his resignation. Battye, op.cit.: 242
58) Chai-anan, Ekkasân, ibid.

In 1882, Thianwan's second brush with the government resulted in his being charged with contempt of court and lèse majesté. It has been claimed that Thianwan was the victim of a conspiracy of princes and certain noblemen. Previously, on the occasion of a royal son's ordination, King Chulâlongkọn had invited members of the royal family to compose a poem in honour of the young prince. Prince Phânurangsî (1859-1928), King Chulâlongkọn's second full-brother, asked Thianwan to write a poem on his behalf. Thianwan's poem came first in the competition, but it led to jealousy among the princes who took part. They asked a certain page boy named Nâi Châng to come to Thianwan, and trick him into writing a dîkâ petition without the proper approbation of the Mahâtthai Ministry.[59] In normal circumstances, this violation of legal procedure would have constituted a minor offence punishable by a few lashes, but Thianwan was sentenced to a round of 40 lashes and to life imprisonment.[60]

Thianwan was to remain in prison for 17 years, until Prince Raphî, Minister of Justice happened to come to inspect the gaol, and found him wrongly put behind bars. After his release from the prison in 1899, he continued to fight social ills. He opened a pharmacy and acted as legal adviser to ordinary people.[61] During this period, he was befriended by some members of the royal family such as Prince Raphî and Prince Sawat, as well as Kirkpatrick, a Belgian legal adviser to the Ministry of Justice. From them he gained

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59) Chîwit: 38fn.5
60) Thèmsuk, op.cit.: 118
61) ibid.: 119

further knowledge of international law and legal proceedings, while at the same time they came to respect his opinion. In 1889 Thianwan had asked his son, Nâi Rọb, to forward his Dream of an Awakened Man to Prince Sawat, whom he knew to be a member of the R.S. 103 Reform League.[62] It was without effect because no one dared upset the King, and Prince Sawat himself had by then become part of the establishment. But Prince Raphî, after he became Minister of Justice some years later, recognized Thianwan's vast knowledge, and offered to employ him in his Ministry. Thianwan flatly refused because he did not want to join the bureaucracy which he had condemned as corrupt and oppressive.[63]

Thianwan saw himself first and foremost as a radical well-informed intellectual. In an attempt to publicize his views which the Bangkok newspapers at that time did not dare or refused to print, Thianwan embarked on the publication of the fortnightly Tunlaphâk Photčhanakit, "The Voice of Justice", in October 1900, not long after his release from prison. It is claimed that he was supported financially by Kirkpatrick and Prince Sawat.[64] Tunlawiphâk was published regularly until 1906. Although it was not a widely read newspaper owing to the fact that Thianwan was much too advanced for his audience, it brought about reactions from the King himself, who at times replied openly in some of his speeches to Thianwan's articles requesting further government reforms. In 1908, Thianwan published a monthly magazine

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62) Chai-anan, Ekkasân: 104
63) Thèmsuk, op.cit.: 119
64) Chîwit: 37

called Siriphotčhanaphâk, "Virtuous Message", which lasted for only three years.[65)]

In writing articles, Thianwan used the name T.W.S. Wannaphô. He was the first commoner, together with K.S.R. Kulâp, to imitate Western writers in using initials, despite the absence still of surnames in Siam. It was a flourish of which both were proud, because it meant that like a prince, a commoner too could be fashionable. But personal experience was to further influence Thianwan's writings in the first decade of the twentieth century. The fact that he had been wrongfully prosecuted in court and sent to prison for 17 years, and that Siam had been humiliated meanwhile in the Pâknâm Crisis of 1893, was enough to convince Thianwan of the need for Siam to quickly follow Japan's example in order to survive. As a "royalist nationalist", as he described himself, Thianwan held no grudge against the King, but he would have liked to see the King himself take the initiative in democratic reform.

Thianwan and his old schoolmate, K.S.R. Kulâp, were probably the first persons to use the word chât clearly and emphatically to mean "Nation". Thianwan talked of the lack of national consciousness amongst the Siamese. According to his opinion,

> In every group of 100 Siamese there are hardly 10 persons who truly love their nation (chât), country (prathet), and religion (sâtsanâ). I can see those who are paying lip service but behave contrarily.

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65) ibid.: 41

> This must be the reason why Siam has not yet enjoyed the prosperity she ought to by now.[66]

Thianwan relentlessly attacked the nepotism of Siamese officialdom and corrupt ministers.[67] He mentioned that the recruitment process had to be blamed, as it favoured people with family connections rather than those with good qualifications.[68] Of all the government officials, he singled out Prince Damrong and Châophrayâ Surasak (Cherm Sèngchûtô) as exemplary persons.[69] Honest, responsible princes in government could not be too well-off; if they were, their wealth must have derived from an unlawful source.[70]

Thianwan's criticisms were directed not the least to the royal family and its members. Thianwan agreed in principle to Prince Damrong's initiatives in the reform of the provincial administration,[71] but he criticized the King implicitly for his choice of certain Royal Commissioners, who did not have the suitable qualifications for the post.[72] He thought it was no use despatching a prince to the provinces with a large entourage and with much publicity, because, before the Royal Commissioner got to his supposed headquarters, the bandits would have already gone.

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66) Wâduâi Kamlang Yai Sâm Prakân Khong Bânmû'ang, "On the Three Great Forces of a Would-be Great Nation", in Chîwit: 138

67) ibid.: 139

68) Chai-anan, "Introduction", Chîwit: 66-7

69) Wâduâi Kamlang: 138-9

70) ibid.: 141

71) Chai-anan, op.cit.: 71-2

72) ibid.

It is now confirmed by recent research into the financial situation of the prince-ministers that Thianwan's charges against most of them regarding corruption and embezzlement were not groundless.[73] Prince Narâthip (1861-1931), Deputy-Minister of Finance between 1886 and 1893, was coerced in March 1893, by his opponents in the cabinet and Phrayâ Surasak (Cherm Sèngchûtô) to tender his resignation, and his dismissal was even given approval by his patron, Prince Thêwawong.[74] Other princes such as Prince Phûtharet, the Lord Mayor of Bangkok between 1876 and 1886, Prince Sapphasât, Prince Prachak (1856-1924), Prince Phichit, and Prince Phitthayalâp, all half-brothers of King Chulâlongkon, were reportedly involved in financial irregularities.[75] Prince Phongsâdison (1861-1935) was found guilty of attempting to flood Siam with fake banknotes.[76] And it turned out that the King and Queen Saowaphâ had to dig into the royal coffer to get these over-spending princes out of their financial straits, as most of them were heavily in debt.[77]

Thianwan reiterated his views that Siam could prosper like Western countries provided that the Siamese Government ensured that the people were not deprived of modern education, the country had a well-planned economic strategy, and a strong army and navy.[78] Thianwan pointed out that a nation

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73) Thawîsin, op.cit.
74) For detail see ibid.: 58-9
75) ibid.: 72-83
76) ibid.: 85-6
77) ibid.: passim
78) Chai-anan, op.cit.: 127-9

could progress rapidly if the ruling class and the governed could work in unison. An enlightened government committed itself to the well-being of its population, and good administration should create an atmosphere in which trade could expand and bring in revenue.[79] Thianwan likened the population of Siam to the apple of the King's eye, and it was the duty of a king to care for his subjects paternalistically.[80] What was revolutionary about Thianwan's writings was his dream of a Siamese society free of discriminating class consciousness; a ruler depended on his subjects as much as his subjects depended on him. In demanding social justice for the lower-class people, Thianwan severely criticized the policy of the Ministry of Justice and the Lord-Mayoralty for failing to provide justice to despondent people and driving them to apply for foreign protection.[81] How could Siamese be obliged to love their nation when they had to suffer at the hands of their fellow countrymen?

What Thianwan was trying to convey to his readers was that every Siamese individual, no matter who he was, should think of the common interest, and

> "I want most of all to see that all of us have a great love for our nation (<u>chât</u>), religion (<u>sâtsanâ</u>), and fatherland (<u>prathet thî kert</u>), and that we should feel ashamed before foreigners and ourselves, if one who does wrong, is left unpunished just because he sits in a high place".[82]

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79) ibid.: 130-1
80) ibid.: 57
81) <u>Ton Nangsŭ Thûn Klâo</u>: 222; Prince Naret Wœrarit was the Lord Mayor between 1892 and 1907, and Prince Raphî was Minister of Justice between 1897 and 1910.
82) Quotation from <u>Wâduai Samai Rŭ Wélâ</u>, "On Moving with the Time", reprinted in <u>Chîwit</u>: 159

In his political campaigns, Thianwan talked enthusiastically about national unity and the politics of concensus.[83] He believed in a responsible leadership of the Japanese type. Compared to big countries like China and India, Siam was a "jewel" because she had so much better preserved her independence in the face of Western imperialism, but that achievement alone was not a factor that would enable Siam to "take off".[84] In his reckoning, Japan had achieved the goal of a modernized country because the Japanese were nationalistic and well-governed.[85] Following the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5, Thianwan was even more confident of the Japanese way of doing things. He held the Japanese in highest esteem from the very fact that it had taken the European nations 1,000 years to reach the stage where they were, whereas the Japanese could catch them up within a hundred years. Thianwan predicted also that in 15 years' time Japan, as the greatest nation in the Far East, would persuade her Asian neighbours to form a league against the West.[86] He saw the Siamese élite as still burying their face in the sand. "If the Siamese", he urged King Çhulâlongkọn, "change their mind now, and decide to demonstrate to the world that they are a capable people, we must march along in the Japanese direction".[87]

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83) Tunlaphâk, passim.
84) Wăduai Rattana, "On the True Jewels of a Nation", reprinted in Chiwit: 122
85) "Draft of a Petition..": 208
86) ibid.: 210-1; Thianwan's prediction about Japan's ambition to lead Asia against the West came true during the 1930s when Japan tried to dominate East and South-East Asia in a "Co-Prosperity Sphere" programme.
87) ibid.: 247

As a journalist, Thianwan believed strongly in freedom of expression. He saw that the press could play a crucial rôle in a democratic society, and in Siam it could improve the people's morality, educate them, and instil in them progressive ideas. Thianwan resented the fact that a newspaper, Siam Free Press, had been harrassed into ceasing its publication in 1905. He commented:-

> There are many newspapers in Siam claiming to adhere to the principle of impartiality, although some of them behave -to put it quite bluntly- as though they were licking someone's boots.
>
> Siam Free Press was not one amongst the sycophants. That was why it was taken to court for libel too often. A newspaper like this is hardly pleasant to the ears of those in power, for its editor is determined to expose whatever the authorities try to cover up.
>
> Indeed, Siam Free Press has rendered a best service to our country in the sense that it was not afraid to criticize the government. [It is a good thing] to make the government think carefully about its policy.[88]

As a proto-Thai nationalist, Thianwan was not nostalgic about the Siamese past. On the contrary, he rejected almost all the traditional values linked with Siamese customs and practices. Many of his demands were designed to uproot certain aspects of Siamese culture. His campaign for women's rights and equal opportunity was in conflict with the general belief of the Siamese that women should take a back seat. Furthermore, he condemned polygamy, and demanded that a law

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88) Wâduâi Samài Rŭ Wélâ, "On the Question of Moving along with the Time", reprinted in Chîwit: 155

be promulgated so that a man could have only one wife.[89] King Chulâlongkọn often replied to his critics who clamoured for political changes, that the opportune moment had not yet come for the convening of a parliament, because the Siamese were like cats. "If you call a cat to you, he prefers to walk away."[90] What the King implied was that the Siamese were used to the idea of changes imposed from above, and would not really want to participate in decision-making. The King did not think highly of the journalists of his reign either. Although he liked the Daily Mail (in English), he was disappointed with the coverage of Thai newspapers.[91] The King was particularly sensitive about his opponents' attack on polygamy. He was faced with a dilemma. Keeping a harem was part of Siamese court politics, and the mass of the population who believed in fertility rites also believed that a king's prowess rested on his sexual power. Prince Pritsadâng had fallen out of the King's favour partly because he dared suggest that polygamy was an evil thing.[93] Polygamy was practised almost exclusively amongst the powerful princes, and high-ranking officials. Thianwan's criticism regarding this social institution had certainly earned him enemies both in the court and in the government. King

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89) ibid.: 159
90) Salao & Udom, op.cit.: 300
91) ibid.: 304, see King Chulalongkọn's letter to Châophrayâ Yommarât
92) It is generally thought that King Wachirâwut (1910-25) was not very popular because he had delayed his marriage and pledged to have only one wife.
93) "Pritsadâng Memorandum", FO. 69/147

King Chulâlongkọn could not remember all his concubines, Prince Sawat, whom Thianwan admired most, had at least four wives.

According to his writings, Thianwan envisaged two kinds of enemies; one from the without, and another from the within.[94] In his opinion, Siam could resist, though not necessarily defeat, the external threat with military strength because it was visible. The threat from inside was much more formidable because it was not visible but existed in corrupt government. Only a well-intentioned man could defeat the enemy from within.[95] Thianwan was conceiving a plan of himself being a driving force against social vices and "official" oppression. He had vowed not to be part of the establishment. But, in 1906, Thianwan seems to have changed his mind, to try to tackle this problem from the inside. Knowing that King Chulâlongkọn was a reader of his numerous writings, he memorialize the King via Prince Sommot, and offered to serve him in the capacity of an adviser.[96]

Thianwan presented to the King two documents. One was entitled Mèkkasîn Kham Klọn, "A Poetical Essay", written in verse. Another was a long memorandum entitled Ton Nangsư Thûn Klâo, "A Confidential Address to the King".[97] It is quite clear from the latter, that Thianwan derived his inspiration from the Japanese victory in the war against Russia

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94) "The Dream of an Awakened Man" in Chiwit: 154
95) ibid.
96) See Thianwan's letter of 22/1/1906 in Chiwit: 189-95
97) ibid.: 197-201

in the previous year. In A Poetical Essay, Thianwan stated that although he was now 64 years old he felt that:-

> I was born at the Supreme Agent's will,
> It is as though I had received a mandate from Him,
> And a promise that I would not be destroyed but live until
> I have served the Sovereign and put down the fire of distress and sin.[98]

From the above statement one can say that Thianwan believed he was destined to lead a mission against the old forces. In A Confidential Address to the King, he said that as an experienced man, a patriot, and an outsider, he knew that the King was convinced by those surrounding him that everything in Siam was going well, and his subjects were happy. Thianwan pointed out that ministers were bound to give him a rosy picture of their ministries. Here Thianwan identified the enemy from within as the officials of the Ministry of Justice and the Lord-Mayoralty. The Police were entrusted with keeping the peace and protecting the weak, whereas the judges should be there to ensure a fair trial. In practice, the Police falsely charged the people with various offences, and the judges took bribes from both the plaintiffs and the accused.[99] It was the miscarriage of justice in this way that alienated ordinary people. Thianwan went on to say that the Bangkok Lord-Mayoralty and the Ministry of Justice were in themselves the roots whence all social ills grew; there might be corruption in other departments which depleted the national revenue, but that

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98) ibid.: 198-9
99) A Confidential Address to the King, in Chiwit: 231-6

did not immediately and directly affect the ordinary people. Thianwan's message to the King was that drastic measures had to be taken in order to redress the situation in the two ministries concerned with the ultimate aim of winning the people's hearts. It was in this capacity that he felt he would be of service to the King.

There is no evidence of how the King felt with regard to Thianwan's direct approach, but it is reported that the court regarded Thianwan as a "prater" who could not even teach his own son.[100] It was possible that his offer was casually snubbed by the King, but he never stopped campaigning for a parliamentary democracy and the people's political participation. Embittered but proud, Thianwan said he wanted to be a figure the younger generation could look up to.[101] Indeed, he was to become a spiritual mentor of the young officers seeking to overthrow the absolute monarchy in 1912 and 1932. According to Thèmsuk Numnon, the army officers who were conspirators of the attempted coup d'état of 1912 were influenced by the political ideas of both Thianwan and K.S.R. Kulâp.[102] Dr. Prîdî Phanomyong, leader of the political wing of the People's Party that put an end to the absolute monarchy in the June 1932 Revolution, acknowledged the fact that as a young man he was inspired by Thianwan's

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100) Chai-anan, "Introduction", Chîwit: 43; Thianwan's eldest son, Nâi Yut, was arrested by the Police on the charge of being a trouble-maker. It is believed that Nâi Yut, sworn enemy of the Secret-Society Chinese, was framed by the Police who had taken bribes from the Chinese ring leaders.

101) The Dream of an Awakened Man: 154

102) Thèmsuk Numnon, "Khabuankân R.S. 130" (The Attempted Coup d'état of 1912) in Fün Adît, op.cit.: 48

works, and was impressed by his radical view when they met not long before Thianwan's death in 1915 at the age of 73.[103] As a man of radical ideas and integrity, Thianwan has been written out of the official historiography by the prince-historians. But in the eyes of modern Thai scholars, Thianwan stood for resistance against the socio-political conditions of the fifth reign -ironically a most celebrated period in Thai history in the opinion of traditional historians. Condemning the princely élite, Thianwan has left a final dictum to remind his compatriots of what he was fighting for:-

> /In Siam/ Kotmâi (law) cannot compete with Kotmû (mob rule); but mobe rule cannot compete with Kotkhǫ (oppression); and oppression cannot compete with Chão Hak Khǫ (the princes breaking your neck).[104]

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103) Prîdî Phanomyong, Bû'angrèk Prachâthippatai, translated into English as "Some Stories Concerning the Formation of the People's Party and Democracy" in Thak Chaloemtiarana, (ed.), Thai Politics, 1932-1957, Bangkok: Social Science Association of Thailand, 1978, vol. 1,: 63

104) ibid.: 63-4

III

K.S.R. Kulâp: A Historian in Disgrace

Just as very few Thais remember Thianwan nowadays, only very few know that the Siamese verb ku, meaning "to invent or make up a story", derives its origin from the name of K.S.R. Kulâp, a well-known historian of the fifth reign. K.S.R. Kulâp was also a controversial figure in his time. The fact that he is the only Siamese historian to have been publicly declared insane, by the court in 1901/2, makes his life and his works well worth discussing.

Born in 1834, also during the third reign, K.S.R. Kulâp was a contemporary of Thianwan. Kulâp traced his lineage back through his mother and maternal grandmother five generations to an Ayutthayan nobleman of Phra rank, from the semi-autonomous province of Nakhǫn Râtchasîma in the north-east of present-day Thailand.[105] His real name was Trut Kritsanânon, but he preferred to write his name in the European fashion, K.S.R. being his ecclesiastic Pali name when he became monk, 'KéSaRô', meaning "rose", or in Siamese "Kulâp". Like Thianwan, he had a good monastic education under the supervision of the monks of Wat Phra Chétuphon. When he left the novitiate in the reign of Mongkut, he entered the Royal Pages Bodyguard Regiment. During this time, he managed to acquire a "smattering" of Latin, French, and English from the French priest, Bishop Pallegoix, who had taught Mongkut. In 1860, at the age of 26, Kulâp entered the monkhood at

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105) C.J. Reynolds, "The Case of K.S.R. Kulap: A Challenge to Royal Historical Writing in Late Nineteenth Century Thailand", JSS, 61, 2 (Jul. 1973): 69

Wat Phra Chétuphon. There he studied the traditional subjects such as Sanskrit, poetic composition, old law and administrative practice with Phrayâ Sîsunthɔnwôhân, one of the most distinguished men of letters of the fourth reign.[106]

K.S.R. Kulâp remained in the monkhood for only a year, but the monastic environment came to influence his thoughts and obsess him with Siamese history and culture. With a good educational background fit for a king, K.S.R. Kulâp might have seen in himself an image of King Mongkut, and could have sought to advance his career in the Siamese officialdom. But the opening of Siam to foreign exploitation in 1855, had paved the way for foreign firms to set up business in Bangkok. So instead, with a "smattering" of occidental languages, he chose to be a compradore and for the next 15 years worked for European and American firms which owned steam rice-mills in Siam. Despite being only a clerk, Kulâp earned a comparatively good salary (250 baht per month in the 1860s). His employers favoured him with trips to Singapore, Penang, Sumatra, Manila, Batavia, Macao, Hongkong, Calcutta, and Europe. He also went to China and Japan in 1880 as interpreter on a purchasing expedition for the cremation pyre of Queen Sunanthâkumârîrat. As a much travelled man, K.S.R. Kulâp had probably seen the world outside Siam much more than any other Siamese including Thianwan at that time.[107]

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106) ibid.: 70

107) ibid.; also Chai-anan, "Nèw Khwâmkhit Thâng Sangkhom Lèh Kânmû'ang Khɔng K.S.R. Kulâp" (K.S.R. Kulâp's Socio-Political Ideas) in Chîwit, op.cit.: 268-9

Kulâp seems to have changed his life-style in the early 1880s so as to be able to pursue his intellectual interests. Forsaking employment in European firms, he decided at last to enter government service, and became an adjutant in the Department of River-Police in 1884. For some unknown reason, he left the Department in 1891 after working there for seven years.[108] During the 1890s, Kulâp embarked on a new career as publisher specializing in historical books. He had a spell as editor of The Siam Observer, a newspaper established by an enterprising Ceylonese, A.G. Tilleke in 1893. However, his love of Thai culture was so strong that he wanted to publish a monthly magazine with the purpose of promoting Thai studies. At the end of 1897, by now into his sixties, K.S.R. Kulâp published the first volume of a magazine called Sayâm Praphet, "The Facets of Siam", whose aim was "to provide all kinds of knowledge, temporal as well philosophical, to all men and women, and their offspring".[109]

Like Thianwan, K.S.R. Kulâp was a bookworm and a Westernized intellectual. Nevertheless, K.S.R. Kulâp was far from from being a revolutionary, having for a start been a polygamous man with twelve wives. Whereas Thianwan presented himself more or less as a political theorist, who based his arguments on Western political ideas and practices, K.S.R. Kulâp saw himself as the traditional Siamese Khrû, "guru, or teacher", whose commitment to Thai culture was paramount.

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108) Chai-anan, op.cit.: 269

109) ibid.: 263-4

A royalist nationalist par excellence, K.S.R. Kulâp's political stance was not dissimilar to that of King Chulâlongkon and the reformist princes. His writings show a kind of subtlety and tact that is so lacking in Thianwan's works. Modern apologists have tried to describe Kulâp's intellectual activities in the same light as they do Thianwan, especially Kulâp's unhappy encounter with the Prince-historians in 1901/2.[110] This absurdity is based on the assumption that like Thianwan, K.S.R. Kulâp was made a scapegoat because of his radical views. In actual fact, as Craig J. Reynolds has pointed out, one cannot establish what their personal relationship with and attitude towards each other were really like.[111] Furthermore, K.S.R. Kulâp made it known that he was amongst the "anti-Western coulture" group. In the Sayâm Praphet, he criticized those, probably implicitly including Thianwan, who followed the Western way of life just to show their superiority. He ridiculed them for their awkward European manners such as:-

> Riding in a carriage drawn by foreign horses and driven around by two men, followed by a train of servants, wearing boots imported by John Samson's, donning a thin linen shirt, wearing phâ-muang trousers made from Khôrât silk, girdled by a crocodile-skin belt, wearing a white jacket from John Samson's, wearing a Panama-style hat, using a thin gold timepiece, wearing gold chain embedded with diamonds,..smoking a pipe

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110) Chai-anan, op.cit., and S. Thammayot, "Chîwit Lèh Ngân khong K.S.R. Kulâp" (Life and Works of K.S.R. Kulâp), Prachâchât, 19/4/37, for example, give a very biased picture of the whole case. Reynolds, op.cit., is discernibly judicious in his treatment of Kulâp's career.

111) Reynolds, op.cit.: 82

> bought from Phra Patibat's store, wiping their faces with a thick European linen hankerchief, puffing Egyptian cigarettes, striking a Swedish match, carrying a walking stick made from a Cherry tree,.. dining at the Oriental Hotel... and speaking a mixture of English and Thai both when sober and when dead drunk.112)

K.S.R. Kulâp had a passion for old books. Back in 1882, the government had organized a national exhibition in order to celebrate the Bangkok centennial. King Chulâlongkọn had invited all those who had in their possession any object of historical interest to participate in the celebration. At that time, the new building of the Họ Luang (Royal Archives) was under construction, and all the books and manuscripts were transported to and housed in the palace of Prince Bọdin, head of the Department of Royal Scribes. In response to the King's command, the prince undertook to send the manuscripts and old books belonging to the Royal Archives to be shown to the public for the first time.[113] For this exhibition, K.S.R. Kulâp, hoping to impress the princes, also undertook to display 1000 volumes of old books in his collection to the public. During this long exhibition, K.S.R. Kulâp, who occupied a room adjacent to the one where old manuscripts from the Royal Archives were exhibited, had the opportunity to endear himself to Prince Bọdin and examine all the important historical manuscripts. This access to royal documents sparked off his curiosity, and was able to

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112) Quotation is from Sukanyâ Tirawanit, op.cit.: 44

113) Prince Damrong, "Rû'ang Nangsư Họ Luang" (Story of the Royal Archives) in Nithân Bôrânnakhadî (NB), Bangkok: Sinlapâbannâkhân, 1970: 115; Reynolds, op.cit.: 70

gain the prince's permission to take the forbidden manuscripts home with him overnight. Later investigation showed that each evening Kulâp borrowed a text from Prince Bǫdin and rowed across the river to Wat Arun on the Thonburî bank. He spread out the accordion-pleated manuscript its entire length, and members of the Regiment, called the Bodyguard of Royal Pages, hired by Kulâp, were each assigned a section of to text to copy. In this way, Kulâp managed to acquire original sources which he was to use in his historical essays.[114)]

In those days, it was the king's sole prerogative to consult the documents in the Royal Archives as they were thought of as an element of the khrû'ang râchûpaphôk (royal regalia). This privilege was extended to the princes, and the rules were by no means strictly enforced. But in normal circumstances, the royal archives were closed to the public. King Chulâlongkǫn's decision to display parts of this collection to commoners represented a break with tradition, as well as a desire to arouse his subjects' interest in the history of the Siamese nation and impress the foreigners. However, the court was still jealously opposed to the idea of making all the "forbidden" manuscripts freely available, and thus loosening its grip on official historiography.

Although a partially Westernized monarch, King Chulâlongkǫn also maintained the traditional rôle of a ruler regarding history as a subject for the ruling class. To promote Thai studies amongst the princes, the Wachirayân Library

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114) Reynolds, op.cit.: 73

was established funded by the profits made from the property King Mongkut bequeathed to his sons in anticipation of "rainy days".[115] Opened in 1884, the Wachirayân Library was intended to be a centre of princely scholarship and for a private membership only.[116]

The Wachirayân Library published a monthly magazine, the Wachirayân, which contained mostly historical stories, reproductions of historical texts, and occasionally interesting tales.[117] The Wachirayân continued to be published until 1915, but in between 1886 and 1894, it was supplemented by a weekly magazine, Wachirayân Wiset. Wachirayân Wiset was perhaps the most important forum for Siamese scholar-administrators, since its emphasis was on the various aspects of Thai culture. In addition, it was the first Thai periodical which paid for the manuscripts it published. A writer of an original work would be paid four baht for each page, a translated one would receive two baht, whereas editors who knew both Thai and English well would be paid eight baht a month.[118]

The last two decades of the nineteenth century witnessed a great change on the Thai intellectual scene. Historical research by Western scholars concerning British Burma and French Indo-China generated an interest in the "Tai" ethnic groups outside Siam, and as a new national identity was

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115) See Prince Damrong, Rû'ang Tang Hǫ Phra Samut Wachirayân, "Story of the Foundation of the Royal Library Wachirayân", Bangkok: Sôphonphiphatthanâkǫn, 1928: 20-1
116) ibid.: 21
117) Sukanyâ, op.cit.: 41
118) Wibha Senanan, op.cit.: 38

being forged within Siam, the old notion that only the Siamese called themselves "Thai" was to be supereded by a new concept of a wider Thai world in the making. Since the mid-1870s, the Siamese élite had begun to take some interest in the history of Siam's tributaries. Amongst the works that came to fascinate Siamese scholars was perhaps Ney Elias' Introductory Sketch of the History of the Shans of Upper Burma and West Yunnan published at Calcutta in 1876, and later translated into Siamese by Prince Narâthip in 1913.[119] It probably helped to rekindle the Siamese expansionist policy towards the Shan states in 1884 and 1885. Prince Phichit, Royal Commissioner at Chiang Mai, is reported to have responded favourably to Chiang Tung (Kengtung)'s approaches to Siam at a time when Burma under the rule of Thibaw was falling into chaos. Phrayâ Montrî Suriyawong, Prince Phichit's successor as Commissioner, also continued to push Thai border to the Salween, curiously enough with the encouragement of Ernest Satow, the British Minister in Bangkok.[120] It was no coincidence that in 1885 King Chulâlongkọn declared publicly that:-

> The Thai (Siamese), the Lao, and the Shans all consider themselves peoples of the same race (châ̂t). They all respect Us as their Supreme Sovereign, the protector of their well being.[121]

It had become King Chulâlongkọn's policy since 1875,

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119) Narâthip, Prince, Phongsâ̂wadân Thai Yai, "A History of Great Thais", Bangkok: Khurusaphâ, 1962.

120) Brailey, op.cit.: 454-5

121) Chulâlongkọn, King, Speeches.. (1874-1910): 41

that high-ranking officials despatched as the central government's agents to the far provinces should study the history of their region and present their work to the King. The Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Nakhǫn Chiang Mai Mû'ang Nakhǫn Lampâng and Mû'ang Lamphûnchai, "A History of the Three Northern Principalities", compiled by Phrayâ Sîsinghathep in 1875, was first in a series of historical studies by Siamese administrators.[122] Other local histories written at the King's request, on different occasions, were the Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Thèng, "A History of Mû'ang Thèng", and Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Luang Phrabâng, "A History of Luang Phrabâng". Prince Damrong, who became Minister of the Interior in 1894, and was responsible for the reform of provincial administration, also encouraged his subordinates to compile local histories in their spare time.[123] It was this group of scholar-administrators that filled the pages of Wachirayân and Wachirayân Wiset, especially after King Chulâlongkǫn himself acted as President of the Wachirayân Library in 1888.[124] By that time the Wachirayân Library had become a club for leading officials in the establishment. The aristocrats also met at other clubs such as Chorom Bantherng Thatsanâkân, "The Reviews Club", and Witthayâthân Sathân, "The Knowledge-Disseminating Club"; the latter concentrating on academic

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122) First published as PP/3 in 1914.

123) Prince Damrong, "Introduction to PP/4: Phongsâwadân Hua-mû'ang Monthon Isân": 149

124) Prince Damrong, "Introduction" in Fine Arts Dept., Latthithamniam Tang Tang, "Various Thai Customs and Practices", Reprinted from the Wachirayân Wiset, Bangkok: Khlang Witthayâ, 1964, 2 volumes, Vol.I: ก

discussion.[125])

It was against this background that K.S.R. Kulâp had to compete with the princes and scholar-administrators who by the turn of the century dominated the means of intellectual expression. K.S.R. Kulâp took a short cut to fame; he began to reproduce and "doctor" the texts he had copied from the originals in the Hǫ Luang. Already in 1883, he had had the so-called "Khamhaikân Khun Luang Hâ Wat" (Testimony of the King-Priest Uthumphǫn) published at the printing firm of Samual J. Smith at Bângkhǫlèm. The original text lay unnoticed in the Royal Library, and no one seems to have read it. The publication of the Testimony, an account believed to have been related to the Burmese by King Uthumphǫn who, as a monk, was taken prisoner to Ava after the fall of Ayutthayâ in 1767, caused some excitement amongst the historians, and brought Kulâp an instant reputation as an expert in old manuscripts, although it was not known how the Testimony came into Kulâp's possession. Literary experts including the King were suspicious of the authenticity of the work for several reasons: (1) the narrative style was thought to be too recent to be of late Ayutthayâ period; (2) there was evidence of anachronistic interpolations relating to the fourth reign; (3) the interpolator was quite ignorant of the nature of court ceremonies.[126])

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125) Chai-anan, op.cit.: 270

126) NB: 118-9; King Chulâlongkǫn, when writing his Phrarâtchaphithî 12 Dû'an, "Royal Ceremonies of the 12 Months", observed in 1888 that he recognized having seen a similar text before in the Royal Library but could not put his finger on it. It was only in 1911/2 that Prince Damrong realized what had happened. Kulâp's Testimony was a

The Testimony was to change the fortune of Kulâp in 1884, when Châophrayâ Nǫrarat (Tô), head of the river-police, seeing that Kulâp had established himself as a respectable man, persuaded the latter to work under him as an adjutant.[127] As a government official, K.S.R. Kulâp obtained a ticket to join the élite club, the Wachirayân Library in that same year. As member, he contributed to the Library's two magazines. He astonished his princely audience by publishing articles based on the texts he had copied from the Royal Library. When publishing a manuscript K.S.R. Kulâp elaborated, emended, and altered the text in so many places that many people became suspecious ot its authenticity.[128] Kulâp often said that he had acquired his various manuscripts from his revered mentors such as Prince-Monk Paramânuchit and Phrayâ Sîsunthǫnwôhân (Fak). Since these scholars were dead, it was difficult for anyone to prove that Kulâp did not tell the truth. At the same time, his claims could not be definitely substantiated in respect of the provenance of the works published. But at first K.S.R. Kulâp enjoyed the benefit of the doubt, and gained a good reputation as a prominent historian at that time.

Nobody could have any lingering doubt about Kulâp's obsession concerning history and Thai culture. A man of

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tampered text adapted from the so-called Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Plè Châk Phâsâ Râman, "A Pongsâwadân History Translated from Original Mǫn", which was presented to King Mongkut and translated from Mǫn into Siamese under the supervision of Prince Wongsâ. Its content is similar to the Khamhaikân Châo Krung Kao whose original was discovered by the British troops at Mandalay in 1886.

127) NB: ibid.

128) NB: 121

humble background, he was ambitious and wanted to be accepted by the princely élite. However in 1891/2, K.S.R. Kulâp left government service and so had to dissociate himself from the Wachirayân Library.[129] By then, he had become a respectable man owing to his "accomplishments" in the field of history. He set his mind on a publishing career. He learned his trade working for the Bangkok Siam Observer, also a training ground for Thianwan. Afterwards, Kulâp and his family established a printing firm, and he was to become the first non-titled Siamese to seriously earn a living as a journalist and publisher. Even before the launching of Sayâm Praphet in 1897, people honoured Kulâp with the honorific term âchân, "teacher", which was normally used to call a learned teacher-monk. But with Kulâp the term âchân was beginning to acquire the modern meaning of "lecturer". He was invited by the Witthayâthân Sathân Club to deliver a lecture to its members in 1895.[130] On this special occasion, K.S.R. Kulâp chose to lecture on the history of the garments of the Thammayut and Mahânikâi monks, and how they wore them.[131] In this lecture, he referred to many sources of Siamese history which were not widely known, such as the Cāmadevīvamsa, Phongsâwadân Chiang Sèn, and interestingly, a phongsâwadân history compiled in 36 folded black books by Phra Thepkawî (Nim) of Wat Khlû'a-Wan, Bangkok.[132]

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129) ibid.: 123
130) Chai-anan, op.cit.: 271
131) ibid.: 273
132) ibid.: 274

K.S.R. Kulâp maintained a good relationship with the Wachirayân scholars until 1897, when he and his family were invited to attend a celebration on the occasion of King Chulâlongkǫn's return from his first visit to Europe.[133] But the publication of Sayâm Praphet signalled the downfall of its creator; not only because Sayâm Praphet had become a rival to Wicharayân and Wachirayân Wiset, but also because Kulâp kept publishing texts from the Royal Archives without authority. When his stock of royal manuscripts ran out, K.S.R. Kulâp had to turn to unconventional sources of Thai history. He was particularly interested in the history of C17th Siam, notably in the subject of Franco-Thai relations. He urged his readers not to ignore external sources, and published translations of the extracts from the French records on Siam. It is believed that Kulâp had earlier acquired the Journal of Père Guy Tachard with the help of Bishop Pallegoix. He also reproduced a picture of King Nârâi's seal, and of the coin Pope Innocent XI gave the Siamese envoy to the court of Louis XIV of France.[134] Knowing that the princes were watching him with interest, Kulâp declared that anyone who had any doubt about his claims, could come and see the real pictures, but he had to be a subscriber of Sayâm Praphet.[135]

In his monthly magazine, K.S.R. Kulâp wrote all sorts of historical essays covering, for example, the introduction of steamships into Siam, the founding of provincial capitals, canal construction in Bangkok and Thonburi, Chinese secret

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133) ibid.: 272
134) ibid.: 278
135) ibid.: 277; Reynolds, op.cit.: 88

societies, and monastery histories.[136] Like Thianwan, Kulâp followed the example of Čhâophrayâ Thiphâ's Kitčhânikit, in making use of the traditional sermon-like method of explaining things in the form of questions and answers in order to get the message across to his unsophisticated readers. Many of his articles were highly pedagogically presented in a characteristic format of Kulâp's sons addressing questions to his father, and Kulâp answering them. A good example is an article entitled "Khwâm Pen Ekkarât Khǫng Bânmû'ang" (On the Question of Independence of One's Country) which appeared in the first issue of Sayâm Praphet.[137]

After the Pâknâm Incident in 1893, Siamese intellectuals were all concerned about Siam's future. Thianwan almost frantically bombarded the government with calls for rapid Westernization. Kulâp, as an historian and publisher, approached the Siam question from another angle. In On the Question of Independence, he not only made sarcastic remarks about Westernized Siamese, calling them phuak fǫtfèt, "those who speak the sibilant language, i.e. English", but he also said that one could seek example in the past and learn from it.[138] Kulâp, when asked by Nâi Châi, his son, to elaborate on the idea of "civilization", and how a country could preserve its independence, displayed his knowledge of Western-style government, but apparently basing his argument on his published Testimony, he maintained that to ensure a good prospect of independence a country had to rest upon what

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136) Reynolds, op.cit.: 76
137) Reproduced in full in Chiwit: 309-17
138) ibid.: passim

he called Chatuthéwâphibân, "Four Divine Principles": adherence to (1) true Buddhism and the Scriptures, (2) good laws, (3) good government, and (4) good economy.[139] These, according to Kulâp's theory, were the forces of an independent country. Interestingly, he did not mention a good monarchy as a pillar of the nation. In Âramphawannakathâ, "A Few Words of Digression", Kulâp assumed the rôle of a modern guru. No longer part of the establishment, he felt free to criticize the ruling class. He emphasized the fact that people in power (athibodî) owed their good fortune to their subordinates as much as a doctor owed his living to his patients.[140] Kulâp was at pains to point out that in a just society, the ruling class had a duty to care for the less fortunate people. He dwelt on a new concept of "corrective" punishment, in the same manner as a teacher aiming to help correct the behaviour of a pupil who had gone astray.[141]

Perhaps K.S.R. Kulâp's most impressive article was one entitled Withî Phichai Sénânuwat, "A Manual of Statecraft", written in 1900. The literal meaning of the title is something like "A Method Ministers Should Use in Order to Gain Victory". What Kulâp expounded in this article is comprised in 25 paragraphs or subdivisions.[142] In paragraph (1) Kulâp mentioned that ministers and government officials should pledge their loyalty to "Chât, Sâtsanâ, Phra Mahâ Kasat" (Nation, Religion, and King) by discharging their duty punc-

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139) ibid.: 310-1
140) ibid.: 326-7
141) ibid.: 339-43
142) Reprinted in Chîwit: 347-67

tiliously.[143] He demanded that ministers and high-ranking officials observe the Buddhist precepts "so that they can rid themselves of a raffian-like tendency that stains their minds".[144] Citing a Pali source, Kulâp advised them to pay respect to ten categories of people, including intellectuals. He went on to compare a state with a human body. A state consisted of four essential constituents: (1) eyes (symbolizing scholars and intellectuals); (2) stomach (the mercantile class that provided a source of revenue); (3) intestines (millionaires); and (4) muscle (ministers and the élite).[145] In connection with this strange way of equating certain sections of society with human organ, Kulâp put forward his idea that Burma had fallen because she had had bad ministers. Another interesting point Kulâp emphasized was, judges should observe the ancient rules which prescribed against prejudice and partiality. A judge's determination to adjudicate impartially should be "as solid as Mount Meru".[146]

Kulâp was a nonconformist; but he differred from Thianwan in one important aspect. Above all, he did not believe that Westernization was a panacea for all social ills; and significantly, he expressed his doubt that Siam had the capacity to make great strides at Japan's pace.[147] In his campaign against superstition and the sale of amulets and incantation papers, Kulâp was not influenced by the idea of science

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143) Withî Phichai Sénânuwat: 347
144) ibid.: 348
145) ibid.: 353-4
146) ibid.: 356
147) Sukanyâ, op.cit.: 45

but by the belief that superstition had been mistakenly thought of as an acceptable aspect of Thai life, whereas it was actually the enemy ever of Buddhism. In his eyes, superstition preyed on ignorant people. He argued simply that if cabalistic writings could help prevent fire from breaking out, then the insurance companies would not have been doing a thriving business.[148)]

Whether Kulâp changed his attitude towards the élite in the late 1890s is not clear. However, he was the architect of his own downfall in 1898/9. According to Prince Damrong, Kulâp ran out of stories from the royal manuscripts, and started to produce fakes, one of which was presented as a chronicle of the Sukhôthai period when Sukhôthai was forced to acknowledge Ayutthayâ's overlordship. In this chronicle, a king of Sukhôthai named Phra Pinket was succeeded by his son, Phra Chunlapinket. Because Phra Chunlapinket was an incompetent ruler, his kingdom was lost. King Chulâlongkǫn saw mischief in the story, suspecting that through his two fictional characters, K.S.R. Kulâp was cleverly playing on the names of Mongkut and himself. The allusion offended the King, and demanded to see the original version of the chronicle. Kulâp failed to produce it and admitted that the story was invented. The King said that Kulâp had committed the crime of a mentally deranged person, so he sentenced him to be sent to an asylum for seven days.[149)]

Despite the absence of conclusive evidence concerning Kulâp's

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148) Chai-anan, op.cit.: 281, 285
149) NB: 124; Note that Reynolds, op.cit.: 77, claims mistakingly that Kulâp was sentenced to seven days of hard labour in the royal stables.

motive, it is not illogical to assume that by the late 1890s he had become disillusioned with the ruling class. Kulâp did not consciously write the story of Pinket and Chunlapinket out of thin air. Like Thianwan, he expressed a great deal of admiration for Mongkut, but was at least aware of King Chulâlongkǫn's suspicion of his activities. The fact that the "fake" chronicle of Sukhôthai was written in the aftermath of the Pâknâm Incident of 1893, suggests that the incompetent Chunlapinket was meant to be associated with Chulâlongkǫn, who had presided over the loss of Siam's territories to France.[150]

It appears that after 1899 K.S.R. Kulâp became the constant target of court criticism, but it did little to dampen his enterprising spirit. He continued to write biographies of important people, and operate a service for anyone wanting to establish his family tree.[151] In 1900, Kulâp wrote an article in Sayâm Praphet elaborating on the account of Crown Prince Wachirunnahit's cremation ceremony which had appeared earlier in the Bangkok Times. Citing sixty-five volumes of old manuscripts and books, he concluded that the ceremony was not correctly conducted. Again, King Chulâlongkǫn ordered Kulâp to produce his evidence. Kulâp confessed that he had made empty claims to show off; the manuscripts were not old texts but merely accounts of cremations he culled from Châophrayâ Thiphâ's works.[152] The King did not go so far as punishing Kulâp for this offence but showed his displeasure

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150) Cf. Reynolds, op.cit.: 77fn.46; Cf. Battye, op.cit.: 367-70, the aftermath of the Pâknâm Incident and the loss of Siamese territory caused the King himself great distress.

151) ibid.: 89; NB: 126

152) Reynolds, op.cit.: 78

by publicly denouncing Kulâp in the Royal Gazette.[153]

The relationship between Kulâp and the court went from bad to worse. In that same year Kulâp wrote a biography of the late Supreme Patriarch (Sâ Putsathéwa), claiming that he would present copies of it to the King for distribution at the funeral of that monk. Kulâp cited as his sources for this particular work several prominent people, including Prince-Monk Paramânuchit. The King was disturbed by the fact that Kulâp had not learnt his lessons. His biography of Sâ was bad enough in itself with its many inaccuracies, but what really incurred the King's pleasure was that it was half-filled with novel facts about Sâ's life, a life which was fondly remembered by those who knew him. Although Sâ was born a commoner, his rise in the saṅgha hierarchy to become the Supreme Patriarch of the kingdom had made him the most respected monk for the royal family, and significantly he had been King Chulâlongkọn's preceptor for the monkhood.[154]

The King not only declined his permission for the book to be distributed, but also ordered an investigation, ostensibly on the grounds that people would be deceived by Kulâp's mixing of falsehood and truth.[155] The commission of enquiry which was headed by Prince-Monk Wachirayân, a half-brother of the King sat for about a month. It called a wide range of witnesses, including members of the royal family, the nobility, the saṅgha, and relatives of persons mentioned in the biography, including Thianwan. Dates were checked and

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153) NB: 125
154) Reynolds, op.cit.: 79
155) ibid.; NB: 125

and genealogies reconstructed. Many of Kulâp's sources turned out to be dubious, and his assertions collapsed under close scrutiny.[156] On 27 March 1901 the commission chaired by Prince-Monk Wachirayân, head to the Thammayut sect, and assisted by Prince Naret and Phrayâ Sîsunthǫnwôhân (Nǫi Âčhâriyângkûn), returned its verdict to the King. Kulâp was found guilty of seven charges "that make him an untrustworthy person".[157] According to the report, Kulâp was censurable on these points.

(1) He misrepresented himself, in that he boasted of texts he did not possess, so that others would believe him.

(2) He deceived people by trying to convince them of the credibility of his invented sources.

(3) He was bent on demolishing facts that had been satisfactorily established.

(4) He was not a real collector of old books. Most of the books in his possession were subject to unqualified amendments, so that none of them were close to the original.

(5) He indulged in wild speculations where he did not know the truth.

(6) He exaggerated beyond the bounds of reference and truthful evidence.

(7) He was careless with language, especially in the use of precise terms, titles, and names.[158]

The King thought that the deviations from the truth in K.S.R. Kulâp's biography should be exposed, and such conduct deserved punishment.[159] But at the age of 67 imprison-

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156) Reynolds, op.cit.: 80; Kulâp's assertion that he had been a student of Prince-Monk Paramânuchit was also repudiated by the commission; NB: ibid.

157) Wachirayân, Prince-Monk; Pramuan Phra Niphon, "A Collection of P-M Wachirayân's Writings", Bangkok, 1977: 247

158) ibid.: 246-7; Reynolds, op.cit.: 82-3

159) Reynolds, op.cit.: 84

ment was too severe for Kulâp. The King decided on another royal reprimand.[160] The case of K.S.R. Kulâp did not end there. In 1908, Kulâp handed out handbills claiming he possessed a copy of the old Ayutthayan laws. His claim aroused the interest of Prince Damrong, then head of the newly founded Wachirayân National Library (Hǫ Samut Samrap Phra Nakhǫn). It was discovered that someone had tampered with the date of the manuscript because C.S. 1066 did not correspond with a Rat Year. King Chulâlongkǫn asked to see the manuscript but before presenting it to the King K.S.R. Kulâp corrected the date back to the original C.S. 1166, Rat Year.[161]

K.S.R. Kulâp was an enigmatic figure in the history of Siam. Although Westernized, he refused to follow the West blindly. Despite his modest background, which he himself generally often declined to discuss,[162] K.S.R. Kulâp's erudition and devotion to history had launched him into the world of the upper class. He could have remained there instead of divorcing himself from the established élite. Probably, as an ex-servant of the Crown, Kulâp had experienced at first hand social injustice and discrimination against commoners by the ruling class. Several of his articles emphasized the moral responsibility of the authorities. The moral duties of the princes and noblemen were like the branches of a tree that attracted and protected all the animals that came to take shelter under them.[163] "If a high-ranking official,

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160) ibid.; NB: ibid.
161) NB: 126-8
162) Chai-anan, "Introduction": 265
163) Withî Phichai Sénânuwat: 360

a district headman, or a general does not show his mercy, tact, and compassion towards his men, does not care about their welfare, does not want to further their career, and does not want to feed them well, his subordinates cannot be expected to be loyal to him, they will leave and seek protection and happiness elsewhere".[164]

It is difficult to evaluate Kulâp's historical contributions, and one has to bear in mind the fact that the case of K.S.R. Kulâp has been recorded or judged largely through the eyes of Prince Damrong and the princely élite. Prince Damrong thought so little of Kulâp's works that he omitted Sayâm Praphet from his bibliography of journals and newspapers published in Siam in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[165] Whereas the princes just wanted to forget this episode, the controversy over Kulâp's activities is still a moot subject for modern scholars. Sulak Siwarak, leading Thai intellectual and famous writer, has followed in Prince Damrong's footsteps in comdemning Kulâp's forgeries.[166] Chai-anan Samutthawanit, editor of Kulâp's works, writes favourably of K.S.R. Kulâp's accomplishments as a journalist, historian, and proto-nationalist.

As Craig J. Reynolds has pointed out, the commission opted to judge Kulâp's works in terms of black and white,

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164) ibid.: 361-2

165) Reynolds, op.cit.: 86

166) Sulak Siwarak, "Somdet Krom Phrayâ Damrongrâchânuphâp kap Saphâp Wichâkân Thai nai Patchuban" (Prince Damrong and the Present State of the Thai Academic World) in Rû'ang khong Somdet Krom Phrayâ Damrong-, "Prince Damrong's Life and Works", Bangkok, 1983: 152-3

and on the basis of rû'ang riang rü tèng (a matter of compile rather than compose).[167] Traditional scholarship, especially phongsâwadân historiography, required that a historian should compile, put in order, and arrange his findings in chronological order; they should not assume the task of correcting, analyzing, or embellishing.[168] Kulâp chose to do the latter, an endeavour that would satisfy the critical requirements of a present-day historian. He is the first Siamese to have written an autobiography. More than any of his contemporaries, Kulâp wanted to involve the ordinary Siamese in the history of their country. One cannot expect to find a perfect Siamese historian in an age when the transition from the phongsâwadân history to Western-influenced historiography was still in process. Kulâp did not lack dedication in looking for new information. His interest in the Bunnâk family resulted in a most intricate genealogy of this Persian derived clan, the Mahâmukkhamât-tayânukunlawong.[169] Some of his publications are valuable compendiums of data, despite the fact that they may be derivative works.[170] Compared to Châophrayâ Thiphâ and Prince Damrong, who wrote history from the view-point of the ruling class, K.S.R. Kulâp was a popular historian, who represented change in Siamese society itself. Even confronted with the fact that he was a "faker", with his intention of bringing

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167) Reynolds, op.cit.: 86
168) op.cit.
169) ibid.: 87
170) ibid.

out the royal manuscripts to the people, one cannot pretend that rebels like Kulâp and Thianwan did not exist at all.

IV

The Birth of "National" Historiography in Siam

History and the Aristocracy

A specialist on Thai history observes that:-

> At the beginning of the twentieth century Thailand was a land with an indistinct and often misconstrued history. Few Thais beyond the princely élite had more than a vague notion of the outlines of history related to the Thai peoples. And certainly no foreign writer gave any indication of much historical knowledge beyond a prinkling of miscellaneous facts among various legends and beliefs learned from the people. Rama IV /Mongkut/ had delved occasionally into some of the royal records a half century earlier; and historical research was given a certain impetus by the Antiquarian Society of the Rama V period, by government service schools at the end of the nineteenth century, and by the nationalists around Rama VI who sought in the early decades of the twentieth century to reconstruct histories of the distant past. But the beginnings of a transformation from the style of the ancient chronicler to that of the modern historian were effected largely by Prince Damrong Rachanuphap.[171]

The above-cited quotation serves as a useful summary of the transformation of Thai historical traditions and official Thai historiography in the second half of the nineteenth century, and especially during the reign of King Chulâlongkọn (1868-1910). History in pre-modern Siam was always an élitist

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171) Kennon Breazeale, "A Transition in Historical Writing: The Works of Prince Damrong Rachanuphap", JSS, 59,2 (Jul. 1971): 25

subject, for it was considered essentially a source of political intelligence as well as a practical and moral guideline for a ruler. This was an aspect emphasized very strongly by King Chulâlongkọn in one of his highly pedagogical letters to Crown Prince Wachirunnahit, his eldest son by Queen Sawâng, in 1893, just before the Pâknâm Incident.[172] History had thus been almost exclusively the domain of the ruling class. Apart from some high-ranking monks, traditional historians were members of the royal family, the nobility, or protégés of the court. As a rule, historians in the old days had formed part of the establishment, but in the fifth reign, the influence of the West had begun to put an end to the monopoly of the ruling class. Early in his reign, as noted in the beginning of this chapter, King Chulâlongkọn had witnessed Châophrayâ Thiphâ's Dynastic Chronicle of the Early Bangkok Period, being written from the Bunnâk point of view, and later on, in the 1880s and 1890s, the King was to become aware of the fact that the initiative in popularizing a form of national history had passed into the hands of K.S.R. Kŭlâp, whose activities concerning the publication of some historical texts, as the commission of enquiry of 1901/2 found out, had brought disrepute to the field of traditional historiography.

King Chulâlongkọn was regarded by the other princes as a capable historian, whose vast knowledge of Siamese histories and royal ceremonies contributed in no small amount to the study of Siamese history at the time. This renown is

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172) See his letter of 23/5/1893 in Salao & Udom, op.cit.: 394-412

not without substance. His Phrarâtchaphithî Sipsǫng Dû'an, "The Royal Ceremonies of the Twelve Months", and Phrarâtchawičhân Čhotmâihet Krommaluang Narintharathéwî, "A Critical Study of the Mémoir of Princess Narin", despite some shortcomings, are invaluable as sources of Thai history. The former was written in 1888, at a time when the Siamese literary circles were discussing the appearance of many old texts faked by Kulâp. The King also encouraged members of the royal family to take an interest in history. During the Bangkok centennial in 1882, four princes still donning the yellow robes of monks were invited to deliver sermons in praise of the first four Bangkok reigns in the King presence. One of them was the Supreme Patriarch, Prince-Monk Pawaret, who gave a lecture on the first reign. The other important member of this group was Prince-Monk Wachirayân (1860-1921), King Čhulâlongkǫn's half-brother.[173]

The King's concern for what he saw as a decline of historical scholarship, and his awareness that a great number of old manuscripts had been lost during the 1880s as a result of poor stocking of the royal documents at Prince Bǫdin's palace, spurred the government to take action in a bid to retrieve the royal manuscripts that had been scattered all over the place. Again in 1887, when Kulâp's secret activities were not yet known or confirmed, King Čhulâlongkǫn expressed his deep concern for the alterations of old texts by unscrupulous writers. In an award-bestowing ceremony at Suan Kulâp

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173) See Ministry of Public Instruction, Thetsanâ Phrarâtchaprawat Lèh Phongsâwadân Krungthep, "Sermons on the History of the Bangkok Period", Bangkok, 1938

School, the King told the students,

> Above all, We are saddened by having to say to all of you that, as things stand, apart from the not-so-useful dramatic literature, there exist only in small quantity phongsâwadân histories, government records, and old texts. Now there is a new threat to their existence, a threat -I would say- that can cause a great deal more damage to books than white ants. Once the termites have eaten up a manuscript the problem ends there, because such a text will be no more read to create misunderstanding. The new threat I mention comes as a kind of poison that can induce a false impression amongst all you students.[174]

The King cited two examples of unscrupulous attempts to alter the content of old manuscripts: the first was a book entitled Châofâ Sâm Yâng, "The Three Châofâ Ranks", which was a cheap imitation of the King's own work,[175] but contained addenda and a lot of misleading data; the second was the alterations found in the published version of Châophrayâ Thiphâ's Dynastic Chronicle of the Third Reign, which revealed that the editor responsible for these changes was not a reliable historian.[176]

According to Prince Damrong, Prince Sommot, who had become Director of the Department of Royal Scribes in 1893, sent his subordinates to transport the royal documents and manuscripts back from the palace of Prince Bǫdin, his predecessor. At that time, there was not a single list of the

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174) Chulâlongkǫn, Speeches..: 59

175) Probably a reference to Phra Bǫrommarâchâthibâi Wâduâi Phra Yot Châo-nâi, which has been translated into English by Robert B. Jones (Thai Titles and Ranks Including a Transition of Traditions of Royal Lineage in Siam by King Chulâlongkǫn, Data Paper No. 81, SE/Asian Pragram, Dept. of Asian Studies, Cornell University, 1971)

176) Chulâlongkǫn, op.cit.: 59-60

documents belonging to the Royal Archives. Without proper indexing, it is no surprise that not all the royal manuscripts were transported back to the Grand Palace. It happened that a large number of the old books and royal manuscripts had been stolen by or had passed into the hands of some of Prince Bọdin's chief retainers. When the Prince died, impecunious servants began to sell the stolen manuscripts either to Europeans or interested Siamese. The trade in old manuscripts was new to Siam. It was perhaps started in the latter half of the nineteenth century by European scholars in Siam such as Henry Alabaster, and Herr J.E. Rastmann.[177] K.S.R. Kulâp may also have had some influence upon this new trade. It was in this way that Siamese manuscripts found their way into European libraries. The <u>British Museum Recension of the Chronicle of Ayutthayâ</u> was probably acquired by Dr. Hayes, King Chulâlongkọn's physician, during this period. Princess Piyaphakdînât, a well-known collector of old manuscripts, once told Prince Damrong that she had bought them from Prince Bọdin's servants, knowing that to have royal manuscripts in her private collection was illegal, but she had done it for fear that Europeans would buy up the genuine manuscripts and take them out of the country.[178] And it was not until 1905,

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177) Herr J.E. Rastmann, a German antiquarian, was involved in the smuggling of a Hindu image, provenance: Kamphèng-phet, out of Siam in 1883/4. However, it was retrieved from a German museum and returned to Siam with the help of the German Government. See Manich Jumsai, <u>Prince Prisdang's Files on His Diplomatic Activities in Europe, 1880-1886</u>, Bangkok, 1977: 230-5; Cf. G. Coedès, PSC/I: 144

178) NB: 130, 137

with the founding of the Wachirayân National Library, that the government began to compete with private collectors for old manuscripts that had disappeared from the Royal Archives.[179]

The establishment of a National Library in 1905 marked the beginning of a new era of historical studies in Siam. A committee comprising Crown Prince Wachirâwut, Prince Sommot, Prince Damrong, Phrayâ Bôrânrâtchathânin, and Phrayâ Prachâkit, was appointed by the King to reorganize the business of the new library. Manuscripts and books were transferred from the three previous royal archives, now abolished, to the new Wachirayân National Library, so that the public, if they wished, could have the opportunity to consult them. On the recommendation of Crown Prince Wachirâwut, the committee decided to look for all foreign books about Siam to deposit them in the library.[180] The search for foreign sources was to be concentrated in Europe and America.[181] Prince Sommot and Prince Damrong were responsible for the selection of manuscripts from all over the country. The library offered to buy any genuine manuscript from its owner; if the owner did not wish to sell his manuscript, the library would ask for his permission to make a copy.[182] As Minister of the Interior, Prince Damrong was a suitable person to collect old official papers from the provincial capitals during his inspection tours of the areas under his jurisdiction.[183]

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179) ibid.: 131
180) Praphat Trînarong, Phra Chîwa Prawat Lèh Ngân Khong Somdet Kromphrayâ Damrong Rachânuphâp, "Life and Works of Prince Damrong", Bangkok: Udom Sûksâ, 1962: 504
181) NB: 131
182) ibid.: 134
183) ibid.: 133

The Influence of the West

It is safe to say that a national history was already in the making in the 1890s and early 1900s, and it was conceived as an aspect of Siam's administrative centralization which began in earnest in 1894/5. Incidentally, also during the last two decades of the nineteenth century, European scholars, the majority of whom were colonial administrators in neighbouring areas, became much more interested in the Tai minorities in Burma and French Indo-China. It was they who evolved a grand theory of the Tai race, which was to feature prominently in twentieth-century textbooks on the history of Thailand. Terrien de Lacouperie, a notable sinologist at University College, London, who wrote an introduction entitled "Cradle of the Shan Race" for A.R. Colquhoun's Amongst the Shans in 1885, was the first Western historian to associate the Tai (Shans) with the Ai-lao legend and the Nan-chao kingdom (C6th-1352) in Southwestern China. He also suggested that the Tai homeland was to be found in China, just south of the Yang-tse Kiang. According to his research, Chinese civilization was not only not so ancient as one might be led to believe, but it had had strong Tai elements. Furthermore, he thought that the Shans, the Siamese, the Lao, and the Tai ethnic groups in North Vietnam were in the past driven southward from their homeland by the Chinese, and those who remained behind were absorbed into Chinese culture.[184]

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184) Terrien de Lacouperie's theory was based on shaky philological evidence and uncritical interpretation of Chinese records. Although it was refuted by Paul Pelliot as early as 1904, it found support in Thai nationalistic circles in the 1930s and 1940s, and still lives on in the minds of many Thais.

De Lacouperie's theory made an enormous impact on French and British Orinentalists towards the end of the nineteenth century, but it was E.H. Parker, British Consul at Kweichow —who acted as Adviser on Chinese Affairs to the British Government of Burma in 1891— who first made a study of the Shan histories in connection with the Chinese records. He published his amazing results in the form of two articles in the China Review in 1891 and 1892/3, which apparently confirmes de Lacouperie's theory.[185)]

One can clearly discern the impact of Western historical writing on Siamese intellectuals in the mid-1890s. When writing to a colleague in 1892, just after completing his research on the history of the Tai minority in Burma, E.H. Parker referred to his visit to Bangkok in 1887, and remarked that: "In speaking four years ago to Siamese of high rank at Bangkok, I found that they were totally ignorant of the history of the Shan Empire".[186)] But by the early 1890s, the impact of Western scholarship was making itself felt on Thai historiography. The princely élite and the Wachirayân literary group were assiduous in keeping abreast with contemporary Western scholars' findings. Parker's works could not have come at a more appropriate time. Formerly, by force of their political traditions, the Siamese had looked down upon the Shan, the Lâo, and even the Tai Yuan as foreign peoples.

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185) See his "The Early Laos and China", China Review, 19, 2 (1891): 67-106; and "The Old Thai or Shan Empire of Western Yunnan", China Review, 20, 6 (1892/3): 337-47

186) Quoted in Sao Saimong Mangrai, The Shan States and the British Annexation, Data Paper No. 57, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1965: 25

According to Prince Damrong, King Chulâlongkọn, realized that the Lao were also of chât thai (Thai race), so in 1892, it was decided that the use of the racial term "Lâo" in the names of certain administrative areas should discontinue.[187] Besides, the peoples in the former Lâo dependencies were to be called Thai, and not Lâo. At the height of French pressure before the Pâknâm Crisis of 1893, the "Lâo" subjects of Isân Circle were required to register as chât thai bangkhap sayâm, "Thai nationals under the jurisdiction of Siam".[188]

In the field of historiography, the Western concept of history was to influence the way in which Thai history was written in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Although the word phongsâwadân was initially used to translate the English word "history", one can sense the inadequacy of its intrinsic meaning. King Chulâlongkọn often used the word bôrânnakhadî, lit. "study of antiquity", when referring to the new concept. It was King Wachirâwut (1910-25) who ambitiously coined the word prawattisât, "science of the past", to convey the actual meaning of "history".

The Historians

Phrayâ Prachâkit Kọrachak (Chèm Bunnâk)

During his lifetime, Phrayâ Prachâkit (Chèm) was perhaps the best known Siamese scholar-administrator outside the royal family. Chèm was a minor Bunnâk, whose father was

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187) NB: 305

188) Phaithûn Mîkuson, Kân Patirûp Kân Pokkhrọng Monthon Isân Nai Ratcha Samai Phrabât Somdet Phra Chunla Chọmklão Chão Yû Hua, "The Administrative Reform of the Isân Circle during the Fifth Reign", Bangkok: Bannakit, 1974: 117

Phra Phromthibân, a son of Dit Bunnâk (Somdet Châophrayâ Bọrom Mahâ Prayûnrawong), and a minor wife, so he was a half-nephew of Somdet Châophrayâ Bọrom Mahâ Sîsuriyawong (Chuang Bunnâk). He was an exemplary official and a great linguist. He was a hardworking student under Prince Phičhit, and served in the lower court when the latter was first attempting to reform Bangkok's legal system. In 1884, he was promoted twice from the rank of khun to luang and then Phra Prachâkhadîkit. In 1891, he accompanied Prince Phičhit, his patron, to Ubon, when the latter was appointed Royal Commissioner of the Isân Circle. In that year he was promoted to the rank and title of Phrayâ Prachâkit Kọračhak. He later served as a legal officer in the Supreme Court at Bangkok until his death in 1907.

Phrayâ Prachâkit was a self-taught man, but he knew English well enough to read and understand works written in that language. He was also a well-known collector of old texts and travelled to the various localities in the country. As a linguist and philologist, he learned the local dialects in such a short time that there was a saying among the Wachirayân scholars that: "If Phrayâ Prachâkit drinks water of any town, he can speak the dialect of that town".[189] One of his works was a comparative study on the various Tai languages, Wâduâi Phâsâ Tângtâng Nai Sayâm Prathet, "Languages

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189) Cited in Prince Damrong's biography of Phrayâ Prachâkit, in Phrayâ Prachâkit, Wâduâi Phâsâ Tângtâng Nai Sayâm Prathet, "Languages of Siam", Bangkok: cremation volume for the funeral of Phra Phibûn (Yûkui Tanthasetthî), 1919: 2

of Siam". However, Phrayâ Prachâkit was best known as a leading historian in the late 1890s as compiler of the Phongsâwadân Lâo Chiang, "History of the Lâo Chiang /Tai Yuan/ Principalities", which was serialized in the Wachirayân magazine in 1899. An innovation in the Phongsâwadân Lâo Chiang was the compiler's inclusion of an introductory chapter entitled "An Explanation Regarding the Tai Race", before he goes on to treat of the early history of the North. The compiler showed that he was familiar with the works of European authorities such as Terrien de Lacouperie, Max Müller, and Sir Arthur Phayre's writings. This pioneer work was so popular with the subscribers of the magazine that it was edited and reprinted posthumously by Prince Damrong in 1914.[190] In 1906, a year before his untimely death, Phrayâ Prachâkit updated his work, and published it as the Phongsâwadân Yônok, "History of the Tai Yuan", the most impressive synthesis of indigenous sources, unmatched by his contemporaries. His talent as a historian was well recognized by King Chulâlongkọn, who appointed him as a founding member of the Wachirayân National Library in 1905.

Prince-Monk Wachirayân Warôrot

Another person who was to influence the way Siamese history was written in the fifth reign was Prince-Monk Wachirayân, head of the Thammayut sect, founded in the early 1830s by his father, King Mongkut. Born in 1860, the prince

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190) See PP/5, note that its title was changed to Phongsâwadân Yônok by the Fine Arts Department. It must not be confused with a later work compiled by the same historian in 1906.

was the 47th son of King Mongkut. The prince was ordained as a novice in 1873 at the age of 13, and again as a monk in 1979 at Wat Bǫwǫnraniwet. As a young prince, he learned English and secular subjects in the Palace School with Francis George Patterson, a special English instructor hired by King Chulâlongkǫn to teach some of the princes, and became one of his tutor's favourite pupils. He served for a while in 1879 as legal secretary to the King, co-ordinating files submitted by different departments and redrafting petitions. Wachirayân underwent a third ordination in January 1880, in the orthodox Thammayut manner, on a raft moored on the river at Wat Makutkasat. He was never to leave the monkhood but died a Prince-Patriarch in 1921 at the age of 61.[191)]

Prince-Monk Wachirayân was a remarkable person, seeking to observe the strictest monastic practice available to him. Also, as an intelligent Pali student, he passed the Pali examination at the fifth grade after only two years, equalling the achievement of King Mongkut. When Prince-Patriarch Pawaret died in 1892, Wachirayân succeeded him as abbot of Wat Bǫwǫn, and Patriarch of the Thammayut sect, although he was not yet appointed the actual Supreme Patriarch of the kingdom, probably because he was still too young, at 34, in terms of seniority. Western education, however, had apparently influenced his views of the Siamese saṅgha. It was in the field of Pali instruction and examination procedures that

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191) Information taken from Craig J. Reynalds, (tr.), Prince Vajirananavarorasa, Autobiography: the Life of Prince Patriarch Vajiranāṇa of Siam (1860-1921), Ohio University Press, 1979

Wachirayân wanted to introduce a certain degree of reform. At the end of 1892, Thammayut monks agreed on a new curriculum, and it was put into practice in the following year, after the Mahâ Makut Royal Academy at Wat Bǫwǫn had been opened in October 1893, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of Mongkut's death. The stimulus for a royal academy came from men who had been abroad, and equally perhaps from the awareness that at that stage advanced Pali and Buddhist studies in Siam had already lagged behind Western indology. But, while aiming to improve the standard of Pali instruction and examining procedures based on written rather than oral examination, Wachirayân wanted to give a modern outlook to the Academy too. Students at Mahâ Makut were required to study not only Thai and Pali, but also Sanskrit and English. Other practical subjects such as mathematics were also taught. Wachirayân himself was responsible for the preparation of English lessons and mathematics.[192]

The reorganization of monastic education culminated in 1893, in the plan of King Chulâlongkǫn and Prince Damrong for extending it to the provinces and Siam's former dependencies. They envisaged the crucial rôle Thammayut monks could play in the educational scheme of the realm, and to achieve this end, the saṅgha had to exploit the old system of education which was centred in the monasteries.[193] This national

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192) Wachirayân, Prince-Patriarch, Pramuan Phraniphon Prawattisât-Bôrânnakhadî, "Collection of P-P Wachirayân's Works on History and Archaeology", Bangkok: Office of the Prime Minister, 1961: (6)

193) ibid.: (7)

scheme was not without political implication. As a historian, who specializes in this period, puts it:-

> The Sangha provided a conduit for the new ideas of national identity radiating from the capital out to the provinces and ultimately to the individual subjects of the Crown. Under Chulalongkorn the government raced to develop concepts of nationalism equal to the West, and using the monkhood as mentors, literally enveloped the modern message in traditional robes.[194]

History as a subject was first introduced in primary school curricula in 1895.[195] But, as a political tool, a first national history was only written in about 1898/9, by Wachirayân, for use in the curriculum of the Mahâ Makut Royal Academy. The Prince-Monk is said to have expressed his concern for the lack of effort amongst Siamese scholars in compiling a standard textbook on the history of Siam.[196] Whilst encouraging Prince Damrong to take up this challenge, Wachirayân produced several of his own researches. Basically the Prince-Monk considered himself an indologist whose interest lay with the history of Buddhism, Sanskrit and Pali texts. He inherited his father's intellectual traits, the interest in epigraphy and the admiration for Sukhôthai culture. Most of his works are no more than historical sketches, but they provide an insight into the historiography of the period. Wachirayân's writings show traces of Western influence. He explained in his Phongsâwadân Sayâm, "A History of

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194) Stephen J. Zack, Buddhist Education Under Prince Wachirayan Warorot, Unpub. Ph.D. Thesis, Cornell university, 1977: 237

195) Chaloṇg, "Wiwatthanâkân": 78

196) Pramuan Phraniphon: (20)

Siam", that Syām was a Sanskrit word, denoting "a people with dark complexion", but as a racial designation, Syām (Sayâm or Shans) covered Thai and Lâo. The Thai divided into Northern Thai (Sukhôthai-Phitsanulôk area) and Southern Thai (Ayutthayâ/Bangkok); the Lâo divided into two large groups: the Lâo Chiang (Chiang Mai/Lamphûn) and their kindred subdivisions, and the Lâo Kâo (Nân-Luang Phrabâng) and their kindred subdivisions.[197]

According to Wachirayân's argument, the Northern Thai expanded their influence and control in the southern direction. The kings of Sukhôthai/Sawankhalôk sent their sons to rule the various towns in the Gulf of Siam area, but owing to dynastic disputes the south rebelled and reversed the process of expansion in the direction of the north. And because the Thai-Siamese were much stronger than other Syām groups, "in relating the history of Siam, one has to focus on their history".[198] This was going to be a cardinal principle in the writing of national history in the twentieth century; and in subsequent periods local histories were suppressed; rebellions and uprisings of the dependencies and semi-autonomous provinces were to be presented as internal disturbances against the central government, either Ayutthayâ or Bangkok.[199] In this connection the Prince-Monk pointed out the weaknesses inherent in the old system of government. Siamese kings in

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197) "Phongsâwadân Sayâm" in ibid.: (20)

198) ibid.: 6

199) Cf. Nidhi Aeusrivongse, "Kân Súksâ Prawattisât Thai: Adît Lèh Anâkhot" (Thai History: Past and Future), Ruam Botkhwâm Prawattisât, 1, 1 (Jul. 1980): 9

the past had been more concerned with their prestige in receiving gold and silver flowers from the tributaries than attempting to impose an effective control over Siam's dependencies.[200]

In his Tamnân Prathet Thai, "The Ancient Past of Thailand", Wachirayân dismissed the indigenous sources such as the Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Nû'a and tamnân histories as untrustworthy records. Having translated part of Simon de la Loubère's account of Siam into Siamese, the Prince-Monk found it impossible theoretically to reconstruct events before the reign of Râmâthibǫdî I, founder of Ayutthayâ in 1351. The Prince-Monk concluded that:-

> Tamnân sources usually give confusing dates and sets of chronologies without good foundations. If one is not careful or critical enough, it is impossible to even understand them, let alone to establish certain facts. How can one look for more reliable evidence now? Foreigners who came to visit Siam in the reign of King Nârâi [1656-88] two hundred years ago had already found it difficult to come across good reliable sources.[201]

However, Wachirayân tried to establish a sketch of Thai history from the sources available to him. Basing his interpretation on the Tamnân Singhanati, he believed Chiang Sèn and the River Kok area in the extreme north of present-day Thailand was the cradle of Thai civilization. From there, the ancestors of the Thai migrated south to occupy the heartland of Siam. He cited with caution the Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Nû'a, Jinakālamālī, and Cāmadevīvaṃsa as his authorities.[202]

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200) Pramuan Phraniphon: 9
201) ibid.: 21
202) ibid.: 21-32

Prince Damrong Râchânuphâp

The last decade of King Chulâlongkorn's reign (1900-10) witnessed a real change in the attitude of the ruling class with regard to the function of history writing. K.S.R. Kulâp's case had put the court on the defensive, and prompted traditional historians to take the initiative to prevent a further slip of royal authority. With the founding of the Wachirayân National Library in 1905, the government, in fact, had taken over Kulâp's rôle as popularizer of historical texts. One man who stood out among the princes as a pivotal figure, not only in the government but also in the field of history, was Prince Damrong, Minister of the Interior (1894-1915). Prince Damrong has been acclaimed as the ablest statesman in the history of Thailand.[203] He was well-respected by all Westerners who knew him. Sir Henry Norman, British journalist and politician, who criticized the Siamese ruling class of the 1890s, could not help admiring Prince Damrong's attitude and works.[204] And as a scholar-administrator, Prince Damrong devoted all his life to the promotion of Thai culture and Thai studies. He was also the most accomplished historian Thailand has ever produced, although most of the Prince's works were written in the post-fifth-reign era.

Born a phra-ong chão prince in 1862, of chão-chom-

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203) See Sulak Siwarak's various articles in Rû'ang Somdet Kromphrayâ Damrong Râchânuphâp, op.cit.; Cf. Tej Bunnag, The Provincial Administration of Siam, 1892-1915; Chakkrit Noranitphadungkân, Somdet Phrachão Borommawong-ther Kromphrayâ Damrong Râchânuphâp Kap Krasuang Mahâtthai, "Prince Damrong and the Ministry of the Interior", 1963

204) Henry Norman, The Peoples and Politics of the Far East, London, 1895: 447

mândâ, "royal mother", Chum, grand-daughter of a wealthy Chinese merchant,[205] Prince Damrong was the 57th son of King Mongkut. In his childhood, Prince Damrong received instruction in traditional subjects fit a a royal son, but also benefited from the English lessons and modern subjects taught by Francis Gearge Patterson. After this initial stage, Prince Damrong, a hardworking man, was largely self-educated. He had a talent that was recognized by the King, and that was to push him ahead of some of his senior half-brothers. Early on in his career, Prince Damrong was involved as a cadet in the Military Pages Corps in the Palace. As a young man, like his half-brothers, he spent two lenten periods in the monkhood to study Buddhism. He led a military career between 1880 and 1887, but in the meantime, he was responsible for the administration of three schools: the Prince's School, the Ecclesiastical School, and Phrayâ Sîsunthǫnwôhân School. In 1885, Prince Damrong was also responsible for the founding of the Phra Tamnak Suan Kulâp School, which was to become the training ground of modern administrators, and later in the sixth reign, Chulâlongkǫn University. Two years later, he was appointed Director of the Department of Education. In 1889, he also took charge of the Department of Health. As the civil duties accrued, he was retired from all military responsibilities in the following year. In 1891, Prince Damrong was sent to Russia as representative of the King in return for a visit by Tsarevich Nicholas earlier in that year. Prince Damrong visited several European courts,

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205) A phra-ong-čhâo prince is born of a commoner mother.

and made arrangements for the royal sons who were to be sent to study abroad. The Prince's tour of Europe in 1891 was primarily a fact-finding mission at a time when the King felt disappointed by the progress made by Siamese ministers in Europe in the field of diplomacy.[206]

In April 1892, at the age of 30, Prince Damrong was appointed Minister of the North, the Old Mahâtthai Ministry. In anticipation of the resentment of the senior princes who were sent as Royal Commissioners to the outlying provinces, King Chulâlongkọn described the position of Prince Damrong as "Secretary" to himself.[207] Following the Pâknâm Crisis of 1893, when the Chakkrî Reformation was considered a most urgent task, Prince Damrong was promoted in December 1894 to the Ministership of the New Mahâtthai, the Ministry of the Interior, to co-ordinate efforts to bring about administrative centralization in the provinces. The centralization process was practically accomplished towards the end of the fifth reign, and under Prince Damrong's leadership and thanks to his intimate relationship with the King, the Ministry of the Interior began to encompass the various government departments such as the Forestry Department, the Mines Department, the Provincial Gendarmerie Department, and the Provincial Revenue Department. In effect, Prince Damrong became the

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206) See King Chulâlongkọn's letter to Queen Saowaphâ dated 5/9/1897 in Phrarâtchahatthalékhâ Suan Phra Ong Somdet Phra Râmâthibọdî Phra Chunla Chọmklâo Chão Yû Hua Song Mî Phrarâtchathân Dèh Somdet Phra Sîphatcharin, "King Chulâlongkọn's Private Letters to Queen Saowaphâ, 1920: 279-280

207) Tej, op.cit.: 88

most influential man in the kingdom next to the King himself.

Prince Damrong was a controversial person in his own life-time. He had his critics amongst the princely brothers, who were jealous of his dominant position. Prince Damrong never gained Crown Prince Wachirâwut's trust or sympathy after the latter's return from England in 1903. A gap had developed between the King's half-brothers, who had experience but never been educated abroad, and his sons, who began to return to Siam after finishing their study in Europe, to enter government service in the latter half of the 1890s. When Crown Prince Wachirâwut succeeded to the throne in 1910, Prince Damrong was put under pressure by the new King and the Queen Mother's faction represented in the persons of her full brothers, Prince Théwawong and Prince Sawat.[208] King Wachirâwut wanted to strip the Minister of the Interior of his enormous powers, as Prince Damrong was known to be one of the King's critics with regard to the latter's new policies and nationalistic activities. Prince Damrong tendered his resignation in 1915 on the grounds of ill health, but while King Wachirâwut died ten years later, Prince Damrong still lived on until 1943. The dismissal of Prince Damrong from the Ministry of the Interior in 1915 was a controversial issue.[209] According to Prince Suphatthadit, Prince Damrong's

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208) Winai Pongsripian, British Attitudes Towards Siam During the Reign of Vajiravudh (1910-1925), Unpub. M.A. Thesis, University of Hull, 1979: 29

209) See Stephen L.W. Greene, Thai Government and Administration in the Reign of Rama VI (1910-1925), Unpub. Ph.D. Thesis, London University, 1971: 230; Tej, op.cit.: 242

son, King Wachirâwut suspected his uncle of corruption in the Forestry Department, and accused him also of selling off the Malay sultanates to the British.[210] And until his last days, King Wachirâwut never trusted Prince Damrong again. In his diary, the King condemned his uncle in the strongest terms, and made it known in his will that if his consort gave birth to a son, Prince Damrong must not be amongst the candidates for the regency.[211] On the day King Wachirâwut died his consort gave birth to a daughter. Prince Damrong made a comeback in the reign of King Prachâthipok (1925-35) as one of the Supreme Councillors (Aphiratthamontrî). In the eyes of young revolutionaries of the seventh reign, Prince Damrong epitomized the old anti-democratic forces. In June 1932, the People's Party-led Revolution put an end to the absolute monarchy in Siam, and Prince Damrong had to exile himself from Siam. He was to live in Penang until 1943, when he was allowed by the Phibûn Government to return to Siam. He died not long afterwards.

There were many factors such as family background, court upbringing, and his successful career as the person who arguably created the Thai nation-state, that came to influence Prince Damrong's writings and condition his thought and ideology. As an historian, Prince Damrong believed that history, in his own English words, was the "science of example".[212] One can learn from the past because it provides good moral lessons. His ultimate aim in writing history.

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210) See "Interview", Lôk Nangsü, 5, 10 (10/7/1982): 59
211) Sulak, op.cit.: 116
212) SS, 4,: 269

was to provide the Chakkrî dynasty with an unblemished image, and at the same time, the story of kings and the ruling élite should be central to any "national" history. Prince Damrong had an absolute loyalty to the crown and the royal family. He had enemies and critics in the government and amongst the princes. He was ridiculed by the young princes, who had studied in the West, for mistransliterating English and French words; he was attacked by Crown Prince Wachirâwut in some of the magazines such as the Lak Witthayâ and Dusit Samit;[213] he was looked down upon by Prince-Monk Wachirayân for knowing Pali only superficially. He never replied to these criticisms, but they may have been a motive in his establishing himself as the most respected scholar in Siam.

In 1901, Prince Damrong was entrusted by King Chulâlongkǫn with the revision of Châophrayâ Thiphâ's Dynastic Chronicle of the First Reign. Châophrayâ Thiphâ's work has never been published or seen in it original form.[214] But it must have been of the same length and format as Châophrayâ Thiphâ's Dynastic Chronicle of the Second Reign, which first appeared in 1961. Had it been available, it would be interesting to compare it with the version edited by Prince Damrong. Many sections of the revised Dynastic Chronicle of the First Reign were recognizably penned by Prince Damrong rather than the Châophrayâ, whose narrative style was not so refined as the Prince's. About Prince Damrong's revising method, I would like to quote his own words:-

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213: Sulak, op.cit.: 154
214: Natthawut, Sâm Châophrayâ: 563

> Your Majesty, I, Your Majesty's Humble Servant, have accomplished the task of revising Chaophrayâ Thiphâ's Dynastic Chronicle of the First Reign. My method was to take certain sections out, add some new paragraphs, and re-arrange some of them where the need arose..... The addenda to the new version were drawn only from the sources worthy of trust, namely, the old records especially provided me by Prince Sommot from the collection of the library of the Department of Royal Scribes, the old records already published by the Wachirayân magazine, the writings of the late Majesty King Mongkut, and finally Your Majesty's own works and verbal contributions granted me whenever I had the slightest doubt. I was always eager to rectify what had formerly been wrongly said, and was wary of untrustworthy books.[215]

In a letter to Prince Narit in 1933, Prince Damrong explained that at the time he revised Chaophrayâ Thiphâ's Dynastic Chronicle of the First Reign he had no idea of how a "history" should be written.[216] Prince Damrong admitted that he just followed Chaophrayâ Thiphâ's phongsâwadân format. It is, however, obvious that Prince Damrong's revision of this particular work, after the royal authority of the Chakkrî dynasty had been restored, was not without a legitimacy implication. The section on the "Front Palace Incident" of the first reign was apparently rewritten by Prince Damrong from oral sources. It describes how the Prince of the Front Palace of the first reign, Rama I's full brother, the Uparât Surasî, aspired to become the next king

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215) Quotation is from Prince Damrong's letter to King Chulâlongkǫn reproduced in Chaophrayâ Thiphâkǫrawong, Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Rattanakôsin Ratchakân Thî I, edited by Prince Damrong, Khurusaphâ edition, 1960: 4-5

216) SS, 4, ibid.

of Siam, and his rebellious tendency almost led to a bloody civil war. King Chulâlongkọn himself had a bad experience with his Uparât-cousin in 1874/5, and after the death of the Second King, Bọwọn Wichaichân, in 1885, the Wang Nâ post was abolished, ending Siam's centuries-old 'dyarchy'. Prince Damrong's revision work represented the King's view of the repeated conflict in the early Bangkok period between the Supreme monarchs and their Second Kings.[217] But one has to speculate that it was intended as an historical justification for the 1886 abolition of the Wang Nâ, an important post often reserved for a King's younger full brother. King Chulâlongkọn had made it clear that he wanted his son, Crown Prince Wachirunnahit, to succeed him.

Prince Damrong often cited King Chulâlongkọn and Prince Bamrâppọrapak (Châofâ Mahâmâlâ, 1819-1886), a son of Râmâ II and the Palace Regent early in the fifth reign, as his chief mentors on Thai history.[218] Prince Damrong may have inherited their views of the history of the early Bangkok period, especially with regard to the rise of the Bunnâk family. Clearly he did not particularly like Châophrayâ Thiphâ's histories of the second and third reigns. Prince Damrong duly produced his own version of the History of the Second Reign, which was first published in 1916. This represented a real break from the chronological framework of the phong-

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217) Cf. Chulâlongkọn, "A Critical Comment", Mémoir of Princess Narin: 274-5

218) Phûnphitsamai Ditsakun, M.C., Chiwit Lèh Ngân Khọng Somdet Kromphrayâ Damrong Râchānuphāp, "Life and Works of Prince Damrong", Bangkok: Bannākhān, 1972: 35

sâwadân historiography. The Prince explained that this was his first attempt to write a history textbook in Western style. In his opinion, while an historian had to stick to his chronology, he had to explain (1) "What happened?, (2) "Why did it happen?", and (3) "What were its consequences?"[219] One cannot exclude the possibility that Prince Damrong changed his style of narrative because of the influence and the impact of the young princes, who had studied in the West, especially Crown Prince Wachirâwut, an ex-history student at Oxford. His association with the newly founded Siam Society in 1904 patronized by many Westeners may also have brought him up to date in this respect.

Collating the texts of Čhâophrayâ Thiphâ's Dynastic Chronicle of the Second Reign and Prince Damrong's History, one finds a marked difference between the two. The former was rather brief, and the narrative style is comparatively coarse. Prince Damrong's version is more comprehensive than the Čhâophrayâ's. Prince Damrong, who produced his version nearly 50 years after the Čhâophrayâ's, obviously had the opportunity to consult Western sources. Noticeably, where Prince Damrong based his analysis on the Dynastic Chronicle, he was careful to remove all the phrases that sounded offensive in the ears of the fifth-reign historians. For example, passages telling how Râmâ II ordered his servants to feed a crow every day because it had previously brought a secret plan of those plotting a rebellion, and dropped it in front of the throne hall, were removed, for a celebrated king,

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219) SS, 4, ibid.

like Râmâ II, must not be presented as having ordered such an absurd act. Râmâ II had ordered a Chinese garden to be built inside the Grand Palace in emulation of the Chinese emperor. This was removed by Prince Damrong, understandably, because by this time, Siam no longer wished to treat China as a superior power. One historian has noted that Prince Damrong's History of the Second Reign was first published more than forty years before Châophrayâ Thiphâ's Dynastic Chronicle of the Second Reign. This gap was to prevent the latter competing with the former.[220)]

During the reign of King Wachirâwut (1910-25), Prince Damrong had intended to write a history of the third reign, because he felt that Châophrayâ Thiphâ's Dynastic Chronicle of the Third Reign left room for improvement, and he had amassed Western sources enough for another revision. But he delayed it for these reasons. First, he thought he needed more Western documents than he already had. Second, he felt ashamed of Siamese diplomacy in the third reign with regard to contact with Vietnam over the Cambodian question. And third, the political situation was not right, and he did not wish to offend the Phúngbun family, whose members, especially Châophrayâ Râmrâkhop (Fû'a), grandson of Prince Rakronnaret, who was executed in the third reign, were King Wachirâwut's favourites.[221)]

To many, Prince Damrong's most important contribution to Thai history has been his revision of the Royal Autograph

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220) C.M. Wilson, "Towards a Bibliography of the Life and Times of King Mongkut, King of Thailand, 1851-1868" in C.D. Cowan and O.W. Wolters, (eds), Southeast Asian History and Historiography, Cornell University Press, 1976: 173

221) SS, 4,: 270-1

Recension of the Chronicle of Ayutthayâ, normally associated with King Mongkut. When it was done in 1913/4, Prince Damrong thought that, like in Western countries, Siam should have a good "national" history.[222] It represented the peak of Siamese historical research at that time, and since then the Revised RA has been regarded as the official history of 'Thailand'. In it, Prince Damrong wrote a long essay on traditional Thai historiography. This was followed by the history of the Tai kingdoms prior to the founding of Ayutthayâ in the mid-14th century. Prince Damrong, by now influenced by Western scholars, traced the history of the Tai back to the Nan-chao kingdom in southwestern Yunnan. It has since become customary for Thai historians to establish a line of continuity in Thai history starting at Tali-fu in Yunnan, whence the Tai migrated in a southern direction and expanded into Sukhôthai, Ayutthayâ, ending at Bangkok.

Prince Damrong was a master of prose-writing, and wrote more than 500 works, mainly historical essays and biographies of prominent people. The majority of them were written after his dismissal from the Ministry of the Interior in 1915. As a popularizer of Thai studies, Prince Damrong encouraged members of the royal family and wealthy people to follow King Chulâlongkọn's example of 1904 in publishing a manuscript from the Wachirayân National Library as a cremation volume for distribution at the funeral of a relative.[223] Under this scheme, the first volume of the Prachum Phongsâwadân

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222) Fine Arts Dept., Phongsâwadân Chabap Phrarâtchahatthalékhâ, Bangkok: Odeon Store, 1952: See also discussion on RA/1855, pp. 269-70

223) NB: 135

Phâk Thî 1, "Collected Chronicles, Part 1", was launched in 1908.

Prince Damrong was a most prolific writer between 1915 and 1942, and after becoming president of the National Library in 1915, he devoted himself to the re-organization of the library, and virtually controlled what kind of manuscripts should be published for distribution. He also introduced the 25-year rule, according to which all government papers of that age were to be transported from the various government departments to be kept at the National Archives.[224] It is claimed in some quarters that Prince Damrong, in an effort to suppress regionalism, ordered the destruction of historical documents of the North. This has never been confirmed, but the Prince had a set of rules of what should be published and what must not be published at all.[225]

One cannot talk of the evolution of Thai historiography towards the end of King Chulâlongkœn's reign without mentioning the rôle of Crown Prince Wachirâwut, whose return to Siam in 1903 after an uninterrupted nine-year stay in Europe, apparently injected a new interest into the literary scene in Bangkok. The future Râmâ VI, as an ex-history student at Oxford, had a special interest in the early history of the 13th-century kingdom of Sukhôthai. He toured Upper Siam twice in 1905 and 1908 to get to know the area. After his second tour, he produced his Thiâo Mû'ang Phra Ruang, "A

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224) Phûnphitsamai, op.cit.: 46; This rule, however, was discontinued in 1957.

225) Prince Damrong, Hai Phrayâ Anumân, "Correspondence of Prince Damrong and Phrayâ Anumân", Bangkok: Súksit Sayâm, 1979: letter Damrong to Anumân dated 23 July 1938.

Study Tour of Phra Ruang's Kingdom", which was the most comprehensive study of the archaeological sites in Upper Siam of that time.[226)]

The year 1907 represented a new era of national historiography. With the founding of the Samâkhom Sŭbsuan Khong Bôrân Nai Prathet Sayâm, "The Antiquarian Society of Siam", history-writing began to assume a new function for the ruling élite. In his inaugural speech, King Chulâlongkǫn outlined the problems of Siamese history. He highlighted the fact that Siam lacked a tradition of erudition which explained why there were not many old records left compared to other countries. But history was important, in his opinion, because one could look for inspiration in the past, and learn lessons from past experience.[227)] Significantly, he stressed that phongsâwadân histories were limited in scope, because they were confined to stories of the royal family. To concentrate too heavily on this aspect of Siamese history alone would be like ignoring the history of the whole nation.[228)]

The King's speech on this occasion symbolized officially the end of traditional historiography in Siam. The frequent use of the term "châtˆ" (Nation) by the King after his return from a second visit to Europe in 1907, and under the influence of his sons, indicated that he had adopted a new stance with regard to political ideology. In the field of history, King

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226) Wachirâwut, King, Thiâo Mû'ang Phra Ruang, "A Study Tour of Phra Ruang's Kingdom", Bangkok, 1908

227) Chulâlongkǫn, King, Speech of King Chulâlongkǫn to the Antiquarian Society of Siam, reprinted in SP, 12, 2 (Jul. 1968): 42

228) ibid.: 43

Wachirâwut's brand of nationalism with its slogan "Chât (Nation), Sâtsanâ (Buddhism), Phra Mahâ Kasat (Monarchy)", was to take Siamese historians a step further from traditional historiography. Already in 1908, he had stated that history was an untapped source of national inspiration. History could bring back lost confidence, and with it a sense of pride in one's nation. As he said,

> The Thai nation is not a new nation, and we are not a barbaric people, whom the English call "uncivilized". Our nation had prospered greatly in the past. We should feel ashamed of ourselves, and realize that, not only do we not compete with others, but we cannot compete even with our ancestors. The people of Sukhôthai surpassed us both in arts and endeavour... The Thai in the past were always constructive and imaginative unlike the Thai of today who have given up the good old things.[229)]

King Wachirâwut thought that the prime malady in Siamese society was the lack of a corporate spirit among the people. History, as a political tool, could be used to arouse nationalistic fervour among the population. The King was an all-round literary genius, unmatched by any contemporary writer, and he was able to use his talent in a most effective way. He wrote nationalistic essays in great numbers. Compared to Prince Damrong, his uncle and rival, King Wachirâwut did not produce many serious historical works. But he had a different aim, and hoped to involve his subjects in the promotion of Thai culture and the appreciation of Thai history. In getting his message across to the mass of

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229) Wachirâwut, op.cit.: [σ]

unsophisticated Siamese, the King introduced a new kind of dramatic literature, the lakhon phût, "spoken drama", which was a Thai version of Shakespearean drama.

King Wachirâwut saw in the Sukhôthai period a golden past. He drew on an episode from the Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Nû'a, to write a quasi-historical play about Phra Ruang, a well-known cult-hero, believed by the Siamese to have liberated them in the past from Khmer rule. The play, Phra Ruang, was written in three versions for three different kinds of Siamese theatrical performance.[230] In each version, the King emphasized the importance of strong monarchical leadership, and the need for patriotic feelings. Like his grandfather, King Mongkut, King Wachirâwut believed in paternal kingship, and like his father, King Chulâlongkọn, and Prince Damrong, he was against democracy. In 1912, an attempted coup d'état by junior military officers was aborted. The King's numerous writings were designed thereafter equally as a nationalistic expression and as an attack on those demanding parliamentary democracy, something that had no root in Thai tradition.

When he died in 1925, King Wachirâwut left a legacy of nationalism to Siam, now transformed into a modern state. The impact of the West was to reach its peak seven years later. The June 1932 Revolution put an end to the absolute monarchy in Siam. Nationalism regained its momentum, and

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230) W.F. Vella, Chaiyo!: King Vajiravudh and the Development of Thai Nationalism, University Press of Hawaii, 1978: 208

the influence of King Wachirâwut's writings was manifest in the celebrated Luang Wičhit Wâthakân (Kimliang Watthanaprîdâ, 1898-1962)'s literary works and quasi-historical plays. King Wachirâwut created Phra Ruang as the first national hero; Prince Damrong, also influenced by the tide of nationalism, had found his national hero in King Narésuan; and Luang Wičhit, the architect of the Pan-Thai Movement in the late 1930s, produced several more national heroes.

Traditional historiography had already been on the decline since the fourth reign, as a result of the renewed contact with the West and the opening of Siam in 1855. In the fifth reign, chronicular and tamnân writings were beginning to be a thing of the past. Prince Damrong, more than anyone else, was responsible for the creation of Siam as a nation-state, and the writing of the first national history. The Prince had one foot in the old régime, and, as he once said, he did not like to describe his works with King Wachirâwut's newly coined word, prawattisât, "history", but preferred to use phongsâwadân instead, because his histories were centred on the royal family and the aristocracy.[231] With King Wachirâwut the emphasis was placed on the slogan, "Nation, Buddhism, and Monarchy". It was in the reign of King Wachirâwut that traditional historiography finally came to an end.

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231) SS, 4,: 291

Conclusion

Traditional Thai historiography up till the end of the nineteenth century, a period covered by this thesis, consisted of two main categories: the tamnân and the phongsâwadân, the earliest extant copies of which date from around the mid-fifteenth century A.D. As a genre of religious literature, the tamnân evolved from the Dīpavaṃsa and the Mahāvaṃsa, the two great religious chronicles of Ceylon, and thus represented the Tai Yuan contribution to Theravada Buddhist literature, considering that Chiang Mai, the capital of Lân-Nâ Thai, was the chief seat of Buddhist learning during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The essence of tamnân historiography was the history of the spread of Buddhism in the North of Thailand. Some of the tamnân, such as the famous Jinakālamālī (1516) and the Sihinganidāna (c. mid-C15th), were written in the orthodox Pali fashion, others, such as the Tamnân Mûnlasâtsanâ Wat Suan Dǫk (second half of C15th), were written in Tai Yuan. In general, tamnân historiography adhered to the chronicular framework of the Mahāvaṃsa. As a tamnân history was used in sermons by monks, it became a sort of popular history for ordinary people, and it also had great influence upon the traditional Thai perception of the remote past. On the other hand, the phongsâwadân, "dynastic chronicles", being an element of regalia, were élite-centred, secular in nature, and more Hindu than Buddhist in the spirit of a 'God-King' cult.

The tamnân are primarily a chief source of ancient Thai history, but the result of this study raises many questions regarding their real authority. Tamnân historiography suffered a number of setbacks. Philosophically, Theravada

Buddhism is against worldly illusions; and historically, it has been pointed out by a Buddhist philosopher, that great Buddhist masters, like Buddhaghosa, were averse to the 'vain' history of the kind of the great epics, Rāmayana and Mahābhārata.[1] The Theravada Buddhist view of history, as it developed through the centuries, is influenced by many factors: the notion of time and space, the belief in an immutable cosmic law, and the catalytic rôle of kamma in human affairs. The overriding object of tamnân historiography, as in Theravada Buddhist literature, "is to convince the faithful, persuade the sceptic and produce a feeling of joy in the minds of the devout".[2] From the tamnân viewpoint, historical facts must be chosen to inculcate a sense of morality among the readers, because history is teaching by example.[3] The implications of these principles lie in the fact that a tamnân compiler could bring in a secular content (minor theme) to support the religious scheme (great theme) of Buddhist universal history, to show the vicissitudes of the Buddhist faith and the kings who supported it.

It is suggested in this study that, owing to its proximity to Pagan, which had already been the foremost Theravada kingdom in the twefth century A.D., the Tai Yuan of Chiang Mai maintained a close cultural contact with Burma and the Mon states to the south. Before the direct contact between Ceylon and the Tai world was established in the fourteenth century,

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1) B.G. Gokhale, "The Theravāda-Buddhist View of History", JAOS, 88, 3 (Sep. 1968): 355

2) ibid.: 359

3) ibid.

Theravada Buddhist culture had been transmitted from Pagan and the Mọn centre at Hariphunchai (Lamphûn) to Chiang Mai, and with it, the various religious concepts, including the tamnân geography, and the notion of a second Jambūdīpa (Buddhist India), which was superimposed upon Burma, the Shan states, Yunnan, and Lân-Nâ Thai.

There seems to have been been a crisis at Chiang Mai in the second quarter of the fifteenth century, when the old prophecy of King Lithai of Sukhôthai (1347-c.1368) in 1357, foretelling the imminent decline of Buddhism in the mid-15th century A.D., apparently came into play. Its psychological impact was great, and in the attempt to halt the prophesied decline of Buddhism, monks from the Tai world went to Ceylon to learn true Buddhism. The Tai Yuan monks under the leadership of Phra Yânnakhamphí came back to Chiang Mai in 1430, bringing with them the orthodox Siṅhalese sect. It was the Siṅhalese monks who sparked off the religious disputation at Chiang Mai, in which they emerged victorious and replaced the old Mọn School of Wat Suan Dọk as the sect patronized by the famous King Tilôk (1441-87?). The Siṅhalese monks of Wat Pâ Dèng were responsible for the flourishing of Pali literature in Lân-Nâ Thai between the mid-1450s and the early seventeenth century.

In the Buddhist 'universal' history, claims for legitimacy and the correct line of 'teacher-disciple' succession are interestingly an important issue for both Schools. Phra Rattanapanyâ's Jinakālamālī and the Mûnlasâtsanâ Wat Pâ Dèng were compiled by the monks of Wat Pâ Dèng, and thus stated

the case of the orthodox Siñhalese School, whereas the Mûnlasâtsanâ (Wat Suan Dǫk) and the Tamnân Wat Bupphârâm Suan Dǫk Mâi were the mouthpieces of the traditional Mǫn School.

The subjects of tamnân historiography are varied, but in all cases, as already highlighted, their dominant themes are 'Loans' from the Buddhavaṃsa, "Buddhist legends", and the Mahāvaṃsa. The tamnân of sacred Buddha images were unique to Lân-Nâ Thai, though the Rattanabimbavaṃsa, "The History of the Emerald Buddha", is though to have been Indian-derived. Later tamnân of this type were written in imitation of the Rattanabimbavaṃsa and the Sihiṅganidāna, "The Legend of the 'Lion' Buddha", but a great number of them are no more than fakes. In dealing with these sources one has to bear in mind that producing a 'fake' in Theravada Buddhist literary tradition is quite permissible, because a pious historian must not doubt the authenticity of his masters' established models.[4)]

The tamnân covering the distant past have so far received much attention from historians of early Thai history, for it is believed that some of them may contain elements of factual history. But the result of this sort of study has been somewhat disheartening. These tamnân, however, hold the key to our better understanding of the traditional Tai perception of the past. Most of them are a melange of ancient Tai cosmogonic beliefs, Buddhist legends, and the ever-present themes of the Mahāvaṃsa. The Tamnân Singhana-

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4) ibid.

watikumân (Notton's version) is the best specimen of the tamnân under this heading. Its complicated scheme covers almost all aspects of tamnân historical writing: a Buddhist chronological framework, the Buddha's visitation, Tamnân geography, the myth of the 'Lion' Prince taken from the Mahāvamsa, and the theme of Phrommakumân, misconceived from local history and the Sihiṅganidāna, and put in the wrong context.

The Siamese perception of the past was also influenced by tamnân historiography, but it centred around a different set of legendary figures and events in Siam Proper. The casual references to Phra Ruang, legendary king of Sukhôthai, are found in the epigraphic sources of Lân-Nâ Thai and Upper Siam in the early sixteenth century, and tamnân histories associated with Phra Ruang were probably written as early as that date. However, both Jeremias van Vliet (1640) and Simon de la Loubère (1687/8) did not mention Phra Ruang at all in their accounts of early Siam, despite the fact that many versions of the legend of Phra Ruang, as the first independent Siamese king, were to feature prominently in the late 18th and early 19th-century traditional Thai historiography. Again, there are foreign themes in the tamnân of Phra Ruang such as the Burman/Mọn-Shan 'Naga egg' culture, the abolition of an old era and the establishment of a new one, and the Shan theme of a Tai prince marrying a daughter of the Chinese emperor.

The story of Thâo Sèn Pom and Phrachâo Chaisiri, which is the sequel to the Tamnân Singhanawatikumân, is not mentioned in van Vliet's Short History, but a genealogical link

was apparently made, in de la Loubère's account, for Thâo U-Thọng, tamnân founder of Ayutthayâ, to have a northern ancestry. It is not unlikely that this claim of dynastic connection with the old Yonarattha (Yônokkarat) kingdom at Chiang Râi and Chiang Sèn was made during Nârâi's reign (1656-88) whose renewed expansion in Lân-Nâ Thai in 1662/3 needed a legitimate pretext. In other tamnân histories, Thâo U-Thọng (or Râmâthibọdî I) is said to have, in each version, a different origin. The most intriguing claim is that U-Thọng was a son of the Chinese emperor but had been banished from his country because his sexual violation of the mandarins' wives. This episode is recognizably a modified version of an early episode concerning Prince Vijaya in the Mahāvaṃsa, and thus one has to conclude that none of these tamnân stories have ever a pretence of true history.

An interesting aspect of tamnân historiography is its geographical notion. The Tai Yuan were obviously recipients of Burman/Mọn historical traditions, especially in adopting the idea of a second Jambudīpa. Like the Burmese, they also called the Siamese by the term "Khọm" or "Klọm", or the inhabitants of Kamboja. The problem of two Kambojas, one in central Thailand and the other meaning the Shan States, and also a Kambuja (Cambodia), can now be satisfactorily solved. In collating the Pali chronicle, Jinakālamālī, and the Tai Yuan Tamnân Mûnlasâtsanâ Wat Pâ Dèng, one can conclude that Kamboja in northern Thai tamnân means the Lopburî-Ayutthayâ region in general, and the kingdom of Ayutthayâ in particular. The fact that Kamboja could also mean the

Shan State of Sèn Wî originated in another context, and the Tamnân Suwanna Khôm Kham, the prequel to the Tamnân Singhanawatikumân, was written to explain its existence. The term "Khǫm" or "Klǫm", normally associated with Kamboja (Lopburî), was also transposed to the Shan. As late as 1854, King Mongkut still referred to the Shan of Kengtung as the Lâo 'Khǫm'.[5)]

The phongsâwadân under discussion deal exclusively with the history of Ayutthayâ. A phongsâwadân history, written by court historians to glorify the ruling dynasty, was part of a legitimizing process in which the absolute authority of the 'God-King' was justified. It contains information about the various royal ceremonies and records of Siam's relations with her dependencies. The compiler(s) of a phongsâwadân history presented the king as a cakravartin, "Wheel-Turning Monarch", who ruled over his monthon, "sphere, circle". A cakravartin is surrounded by petty rulers, and cannot have a superior. The Siamese kings, who sent tribute-bearing missions to the Celestial Court at Peking, could not publicly acknowledge anyone in the world as their suzerain; thus the whole history of Sino-Siamese tributary relations was deliberately omitted from the old phongsâwadân.

It is suggested that Chinese historical traditions may have played a part in the outlook of the Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ, though in different ways in the Ayutthayâ and early Bangkok periods. The Siamese were familiar

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5) G. Coedès, (comp.), "English Correspondence of King Mongkut", JSS, 21 (1928): 17

with Chinese Histories, and the Siamese court is known to have hired Chinese scholars in its service. The outstanding feature of the Ayutthayâ recensions, especially the Luang Prasert Chronicle and the C.S.1136 Fragment, is their high degree of accuracy, aquality associated with traditional Chinese historiography. The sack of Ayutthayâ in 1767 by the Burmese resulted in the loss of old government records. The compilers of the post-Ayutthayâ period were faced with the unavailability of archival materials, and apparently forced to resort to another chronicular tradition than the 2/k.125-LP/1680-C.S.1136 group.

The compilation of the detailed phongsâwadân during Râmâ I's reign (1782-1809) was commissioned by the king as part of his cultural restoration of Siam. There were several considerations that came to influence the way the detailed phongsâwadân were written. This was an age of politicized scholar-monks, who, in the absence of reliable materials, turned to the chronicular tradition they knew best, i.e. the Culayuddhakaravaṃsa. In terms of literature, this was also the beginning of a mild Sinicization of Siam, and the new detailed phongsâwadân must be seen as a by-product of this process. The influence of the narrative style of the Sâmkok, "Romance of the Three Kingdom", on the Siamese chronicles was very noticeable. The Chinese principle of "praise and blame" was adopted rigorously by the compiler-monks, especially Somdet Phra Wannarat of Wat Phô, at the expense of accuracy. In times of war, the phongsâwadân were regarded as a psychological boost, and in assessing the recent past, the compilers

lost no time in condemning the Bân Phlû Luang dynasty for the fall of Ayutthayâ. Again, to achieve these ends, there are loaned episodes from the Sâmkok and the dominant theme of the Mahāvaṃsa in Somdet Phra Wannarat's Chronicle of Ayutthayâ.

Legitimacy was an important issue in the phrarâtcha phongsâwadân compiled during the first Bangkok reign. There is a marked difference in the treatment of Somdet Phra Phetrâchâ's reign (1688-1703) by the compiler of Chât, and the compilers of the later recensions. Whereas Chât, a work sponsored by the Bân Phlû Luang kings, clearly gives some legitimation to the usurper-founder of their dynasty, Phan/1795 and Wannarat/1805? see Phra Phetrâchâ's accession as the beginning of a long period of internal decay which climaxed in the fall of Ayutthayâ in 1767. One cannot fail to notice that of all the detailed phrarâtchaphongsâwadân, only Chât provides the correct chronological framework for the period between 1656 and 1727.

One has also to take into account the weighty influence of Somdet Phra Wannarat of Wat Phra Chétuphon (Phô) in the field of historiography. Early on in 1789, Somdet Phra Wannarat (then Phra Wimonlatham) had compiled or supervised the compilation of a Pali chronicle entitled Saṅgītiyavaṃsa in commemoration of the Buddhist Council held in the previous year. It was conceived, in emulation of Phra Rattanapanyâ's famous Jinakālamālī, as a universal Buddhist history, culminating in the reign of Râmâ I. Its object was to extol the Chakkrî brothers, Râmâ I and his younger full-brother, the

Wang Nâ Prince, thus providing them with legitimate claims to the throne of Siam. In it, Somdet Phra Wannarat expressed the saṅgha view of Ayutthayan history, and explained the rise and fall of the various dynasties in terms of kamma. He concentrated particularly upon the Bân Phlû Luang kings, and held them responsible for the fall of Ayutthayâ in 1767. The Saṅgīti/1789 had a great influence upon the compilers of the detailed chronicles, and the condemnations of the Bân Phlû Luang kings were trasferred from the former to the latter.

Analyzing the content and chronological framework of vV/1640 (van Vliet's Short History), I have suggested that there existed a saṅgha version of the Chronicle of Ayutthayâ in Ayutthayâ times, and that vV/1640 was a Dutch translation of a Siamese original compiled by monk(s). The fact that the chronology of the chronicle part of vV/1640 corresponds exactly with that of Saṅgīti/1789 seems to suggest that this chronicular tradition may have been transmitted within the saṅgha. The most amazing thing about Saṅgīti/1789 is that it contains two sets of calculation with regard to the reign periods. Its part corresponding to vV/1640 is based on traditional Tai-Chinese arithmetic, whereas from the reign of Nârâi onwards one can reconstruct the correct chronology of Saṅgīti/1789 only by using modern arithmetic. It is difficult to understand why Somdet Phra Wannarat, at this stage, wanted to introduce anomaly into traditional Thai historiography.

One must always bear in mind that the detailed phongsâ-

wadân were a result of 'scissors and paste' treatment. A compiler could show his preference for a certain episode and try to amend it. This is quite obvious in the cases of Phan/1795 (I), Phan/1795 (II), and Wannarat/1805?. It can be said that the revision work of the Chronicle of Ayutthayâ was to culminate in a final version represented by the British Museum Recension of 1808. In 1850, when Prince-Monk Paramânuchit compiled an abridged chronicle of Ayutthayâ, there is internal evidence to suggest a further shift towards the Culayud model, both in terms of chronology and the kings' names. In its turn, the Abridged Chronicle was to be the authority of the Royal Autograph Recension, compiled by King Mongkut and Prince Wongsâ in 1855. The latter was to become the 'official' history of Siam in the latter half of the nineteenth century. It underwent a further revision by Prince Damrong in 1913.

The decline of traditional Thai historiography in the nineteenth century has to be explained in the context of sociopolitical changes and the intellectual development of the Siamese élite between the 1830s and the first decade of the twentieth century. Already in the second reign (1809-24), a peaceful atmosphere had given rise to a new mercantile class comprising both princes and noblemen, who had a stake in the China trade. The emergence of this new group appears to have had a stimulating effect on the upgrading of Siamese popular literature by the court circles. The ornate klǫn-bot-lakhǫn, "dramatic play", and the simpler klǫn-suphâp, devised by Sunthǫn (Phû), now began to replace the Indian-derived chan and khlông versifications as the type of literary

works favoured by the king. The reign of Râmâ III (1824-51) represented, in territorial terms, the last zenith of pre-modern Siam. It was a transitional period in the sense that many aspects of Thai culture reached maturity during the reign of a most pious king. The renewed contact with the West in the beginning of the reign, and the arrival of Protestant missionaries in greater numbers in the 1830s, widened the Siamese vision of the outside world. Their greatest contribution to the Siamese intellectuals of this period was the introduction of Western learning to them.

Scientific knowledge was directly responsible for the decline of traditional scholarship. Westernized Siamese began to question the validity of some Hindu-Buddhist principles. Roughly at this time, when realism was becoming a feature of Siamese literature, the Traiphûm geography, also characteristic of tamnân historiography, was to be rejected. In fact, the author of The World of Lady Sĭčhulâlak (c.1830s) was describing the real world he knew of, and proposing, in the face of the presence of the mitchâthitthi, and recognizing that the Siamese king could no longer claim the status of a cakravartin, a new system of international relations. Some thirty years later, a leading Siamese intellectual, Châo-phrayâ Thiphâkǫrawong (Kham Bunnâk), the fourth-reign Minister of Foreign Affairs, was bold enough to quite repudiate the claims of the Traiphûm literature. His book, Nangsŭ Sadèng Kitčhânukit (1867), finally saw off the Traiphûm world-view.

Leaving aside Prince-Monk Paramânuchit's Abridged Chronicle of Ayutthayâ and his famous historical poem, Taleng

Phâi, a tribute to King Narésuan, one can say that Prince-Monk Mongkut's discovery in 1833 of the Sukhôthai inscriptions had already provided another source of inspiration for the Siamese élite. It was concrete evidence of a 'golden age' of the Thai. Clearly the author of The World was inspired by it, and paternalism of the Râmkhamhèng type was to replace the traditional 'God-King' cult in the fourth reign.

The opening of Siam in the reign of King Mongkut (1851-1868), following the signing of the unequal Bowring Treaty with Britain in 1855, witnessed the influx of Western ideas and naturally the further decline of traditional scholarship. With the pressure of Western imperialism coming from all directions, and the rapid decline of China in the Far East, Mongkut felt the need to review Siam's past foreign policies with regard to Sino-Siamese tributary relations and Siam's influence over events in Cambodia in the mid-19th century. In these circumstances, history was to assume a new function, and serve a new political purpose. Mongkut's proclamation severing the ostensibly unequal diplomatic tie with China in 1853, and his Abridged Khmer Chronicle (c.1862), asserting Siam's sovereign rights over Cambodia, were instances of historical writings outside the framework of traditional Thai historiography. King Mongkut, in compiling the Royal Autograph Recension (1855), was aware of the shortcomings of the Siamese records and showed his interest in European historical accounts of Siam. He was thus the first 'modern' historian of Siam.

It is widely claimed that Châophrayâ Thiphâ, who compiled the Dynastic Chronicle of the Early Bangkok Period in 1869, was Siam's last great chronicler. This is certainly true in the sense that he used the traditional annalistic approach. But inasmuch as it was compiled during the height of the Bunnâk power it represented peculiarly their view of the first four Bangkok reigns. Through it, Châophrayâ Thiphâ was able to portray the achievements and prestige of his family. It has been shown that Châophrayâ Thiphâ's Dynastic Chronicle of the Third Reign, lacks objectivity because of this, a fact resented by Prince Damrong. Modern research also confirms that in dealing with Siamo-Annamese relations during the third reign, Châophrayâ Thiphâ deliberately glossed over the blunders of members of his family.[6)]

There were new developments in the reign of King Chulâlongkọn that contributed to the decline of traditional historiography: the increasing amount of foreign trade, which gave birth to a Westernized comprador class, which was most receptive to Western political ideas; the printing press and the book trade; and most important of all, the looming threat of Western colonialism.

Although Siam remained independent throughout the nineteenth century, and one cannot take the credit away from the princely élite for their part in pulling Siam through the traumas of the Pâknâm Crisis in 1893, historians and

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6) David. P. Chandler, Cambodia Before the French: Politics in a Tributary Kingdom, 1794-1848, Unpub. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Michigan, 1973: 11-2

political scientists have often formed a misconception about 19th-century Siam, thanks to the royalist historiography. Thus, many people have become over-excited about the cosmetic changes before Pâknâm, and the almost too late so-called 'Chakkrî Reformation' thereafter. Without a proper knowledge of the R.S.103 Memorandum, the existence of a Royalist Reform League engineered by Prince Pritsadâng, and its subsequent liquidation in the late 1880s, and the political writings of Thianwan and K.S.R. Kulâp, it is too easy to conclude that politically, no significant disagreements existed about the country's governance before the June 1932 Revolution, which put an end to the absolute monarchy. The demand for democratic-style reform was first made by the Westernized princes in January 1885, even if, before long, the Reform League was neutralized, and Prince Pritsadâng had to flee.

Both Thianwan and K.S.R. Kulâp had a comprador background. They were respected scholars and self-made men, who made great contributions to the intellectual world of Siam during the fifth reign. However, they have been written out of history; Thianwan, as a radical thinker, for his political conscience, and determined fight against social injustice, and K.S.R. Kulâp, as an enterprising historian, for trying to break the royal monopoly in history writing. Historiographically, the works of Thianwan and K.S.R. Kulâp are essential to anyone wanting to know old Siam more intimately. Thianwan's criticisms of the ruling class have been proved to be true, but he was wrongfully imprisoned for 17 years.

K.S.R. Kulâp was publicly declared insane for popularizing the royal manuscripts, and all his numerous works represented as fakes. Further research should reveal the verity of the findings of Prince-Monk Wachirayân's Commission of Inquiry. Already, a modern historian, D.P. Chandler, has praised Kulâp's Anâm Sayâm Yut, "History of Siamo-Annamese Wars", for its accuracy and fact that can be confirmed by Cambodian and Vietnamese records. Furthermore, he has rated Anâm Sayâm Yut[7] more highly than Châophrayâ Thiphâ's rendition of Siamo-Annamese conflict in his Dynastic Chronicle of the Third Bangkok Reign.[8]

The cases of K.S.R. Kulâp and Thianwan seem to have spurred the court to take action to prevent a further slip of government influence and control of the means of popular and political writings. The founding of the Wachirayân National Library in 1905 represented another stage of the evolution of national historiography. From the 1890s, when the reform of provincial administration was still going on, and the new centralized Siam was in the making, history played a major rôle in forging a new national identify. For Prince-Monk Wachirayân and Prince Damrong, creators of national historiography, the Tai peoples had to have a common destiny and a shared past, but as the Siamese had been the leading ethnic group, so a national history had to be written from the Siamese point of view, and local and regional

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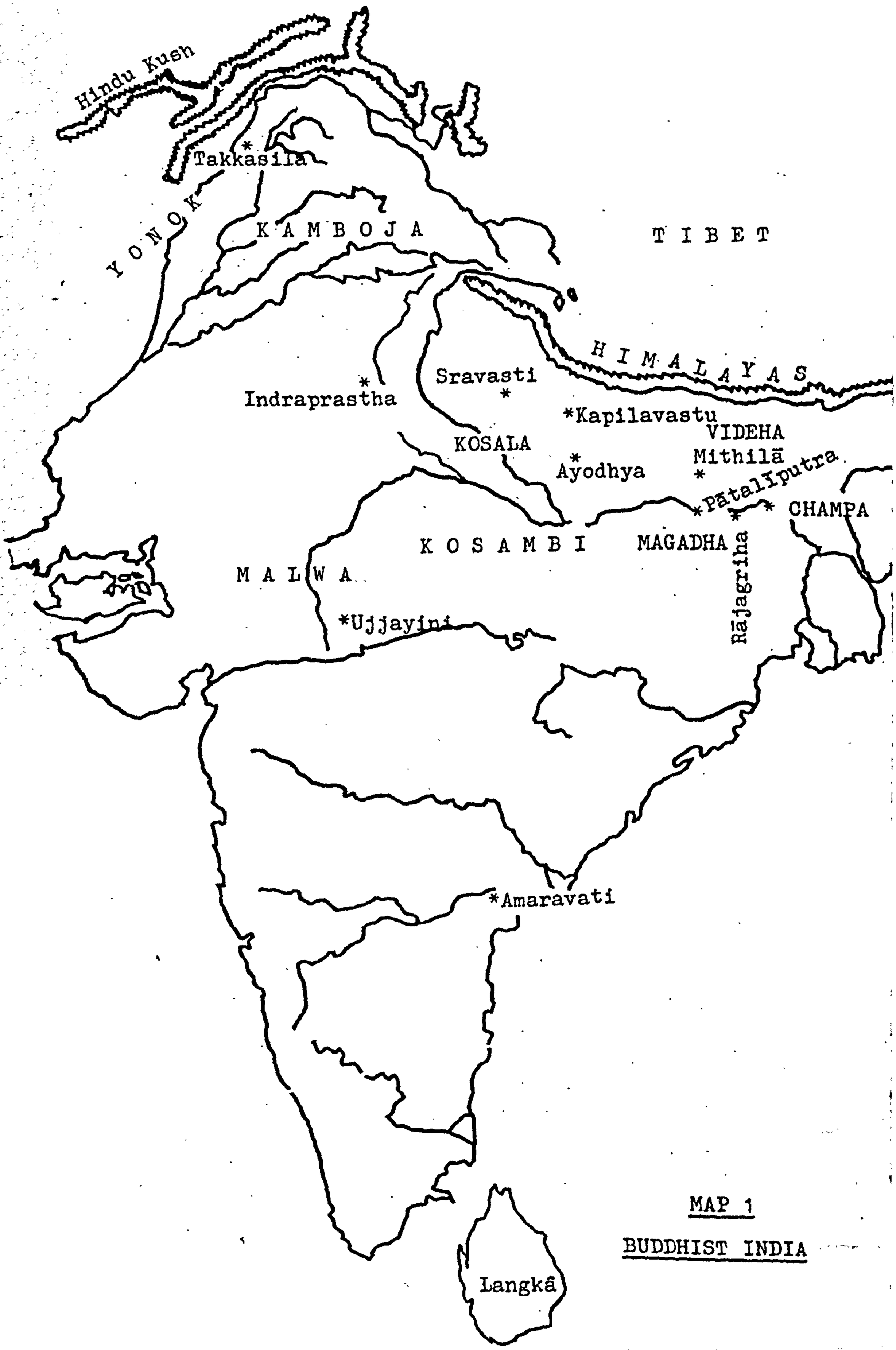
7) Originally written in 1903, when Kulâp was 70 years old, Anâm Sayâm Yut was reprinted in two volumes by Phrè Phitthayâ in 1971.

8) Chandler, op.cit.: 12, 14-5

feelings, for instance, of the North had to be suppressed.

Crown Prince Wachirâwut injected a new interest in the Siamese past with his nationalistic ideas. He also coined the word prawattisât to represent the Western concept of history. Historical studies finally entered a new era in 1907, when the Antiquarian Society of Siam was inaugurated by King Chulâlongkọn. According to the King, the phongsâwadân had become obsolete because of their dynastic framework. The idea of national unity began to permeate the minds of the ruling élite. Since his return from a second visit to Europe in 1907, the word chât or "nation" had begun to feature frequently in the King's speeches. By that time, Siam, as a modern nation-state, had come into existence, and the ultimate goal in historical writing was to inculcate patriotic feelings in the masses. Prince Damrong, the "Father of Thai History", and King Wachirâwut, the "Father of Thai Nationalism" two of the foremost historians of the early 20th century, were committed to this aim albeit, in the latter case, with very confused results. Traditional historiography, no longer serving a practical political purpose, had to bow out.



MAP 1

BUDDHIST INDIA

Mogaung
*Tali
N A N - C H A O
(G A N D H A R A)
* Yunnan-fu
Bhamo
KAMBOJA (II)
Sèn Wî
KOSAMBI
SIP-SONG-PAN-NA
*Mandalay
*Chiang Rung
Chiang Tung
*Pagan
B U R M A
(Arimaddana)
Chiang Sèn
YONARATTHA
*Luang Phrabang
Chiang Rai
L
A
N
C
H
A
N
G
Phayao
*Toung-oo
L A N-N A T H A I
Chiang Mai
*Lamphûn
*Nân
PHINGKHARAT
*Lampâng
Wiang Chan
*Phrè
MON STATES
S
* Sawankhalôk
Pegu
Suthammawadi
* Sukhôthai
Y
*Phitsanulôk
Martaban
*Kamphèngphet
Ti
m
Lopburî
Suphan
C H A M P A
KAMBOJA
*Ayutthayâ
DVARAVATI
Phetchaburî
*Angkor
K A M B U J A
GULF of SIAM

MAP 2

TAMNAN GEOGRAPHY

APPENDIX I

List of Kings of Chiang Mai

	Inscription of Wat Phra Yün (A.D. 1370)	Inscription of Wat Suwanna Mahâ Wihân (1410)	Jinakālamālī (1516)	Phongsâwadân Yônok (1906) & Chronicle of Chiang Mai
Mangrâi	Phrayâ Mangrâi Luang	Mangrâi	1261-1311	1258-1317
Khrâmmarâchâ (Sai Songkhrâm)	Not mentioned	Khrâm	1311-1325 at Chiang Râi	1317-1318
Sèn Phû (I)	————	Sèn Phû	1311-1312 at Chiang Mai	1318-1319
Khun Khû'a	————	Not mentioned	1312-1321	1319-1322
Châo Khrôn	————	————	1321 (2ms)	Not mentioned
Châo Khakkha	————	————	(3ms)	————
Nâmthuam	————	————	(7ms)	1322-1324
Sèn Phû	————	————	1322-1334	1324-1328

	Inscription of Wat Phra Yün	Inscription of Wat Suwanna Mahâ Wihân	Jinakālamālī	P. Yônok & C. of Chiang Mai
Kham Fû	Phrayâ Kham Fû	Kham Fû	1334-1336	1328-1334
Phâ Yû	Phrayâ Phâ Yû	Phâ Yû	1336-1355	1334-1367
Kilanâ (Kü Nâ)	Thâo Sọng Sàn Nâ	Kalinâ	1355-1385	1367-1388
Sèn Mû'ang Mâ		Sèn Merng Mâ	1385-1401	1388-1411
Sâm Fang Kèn			1401-1441	1411-1441
Tilôkkarât			1441-1487	1441-1487
Châo Yôt Chiang Râi			1487-1495	1487-1495
Mû'ang Kèw			1495-1525	1495-1525
Mû'ang Ket Klâo (I)			1525-	1525-1538
Sâi Kham				1538-1543
Mû'ang Ket Klâo (II)				1543-1545

	P. Yônok & C. of Chiang Mai
Mahâthéwî (I)	1545-
Upayôrât	1545-1551
Mékut	1551-1564*
Mahâthéwî (II)	1564-1578
=End of Mangrâi's dynasty in 1578=	
Tharawaddy (Burmese prince)	1578-1607

* Chiang Mai became Burma's tributary princedom in 1558.

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APPENDIX II

List of the Tamnân, Phongsâwadân, and Some Other Literary Works

Tamnân & Phongsâwadân	Other Literary & Historical Works	Comp. & tr. date	Date of manuscript
Mûnlasâtsanâ (MS/SD)		2nd half C15th	1837
Cāmadevīvaṃsa			
Sihiṅganidāna		1450's	
2/K.125 Fragment		c. C15th	late Ayut.
	Lilit Yuan Phâi	c. 1475-1488	
	Atthasālinī-Atthayojanā	1495	
	Maleyyatherasutta	c. 1500	
	Panyâtchâdok	c. 1450-1650	
Jinakālamālī		1516+addendum in 1528	late Ayut.
	Khlông Nirât Hariphunchai	1517	1838
Mûnlasâtsanâ (MS/PD)		c. 1520's	
	Khlông Mangtharâ	1614	1730
Tamnân Singhanawatikumân		1st half C17th	Notton 1880
Tamnân Suwannakhômkham			
van Vliet's Short History		1640	
	Lilit Phra Lo	c. 1662-1688?	
Luang Prasert Recension		1680	1680, 1774, & 1787
	Thawâthotsamât Khlông Dan	c.1662-1687	

C.S.1136 Fragment		c.1733	1774
	Phra Mâlaiyasût Khamluang	c.1737	
C.S.1145 Fragment		?1774-1782	1783
	Râchâthirât (Mon Chronicle)	tr. 1785	
Saṅgītiyavaṃsa		1789	
	Nithân Sipsong Liam or Nithân Irân Râtchatham	1st tr. c.1733-1758 2nd tr. c.1780's	
	Sâmkok	tr. ?1780's-1794	
	Saihan	tr. ————	
	Nirât Rû'ang Tî Mû'ang Phamâ	1793	
Chakkraphatdiphong (Chât)		? early 1790's	
Phančhanthanumât		1795	
Wannarat		1795	
	Ang Eng Fragment	Presented to Râmâ I, 1796	
	Râmmakian	1798	
	Phra Thammaprîchâ (Kèw)'s Trailôkkawinichai	1802	
Culayuddhakāravaṃsa		c.1805-1811	
Chronique de Xieng Mái		c.1806-1815, Notton's ed.	
	Sunthon (Phû)'s Nirât Mû'ang Klèng & Nirât Phra Bât	c.1806/7	
"Phongsâwadân" Mû'ang Nû'a		1807	
British Museum Recension		1808	
	Nirât Narin	c.1809	
	Phrayâ Trang's Nirât Thalâng	c.1809	

Thetsanâ Chunlayutthakârawong	Râmâ II's plays: Inao, & etc.	1809-1824
		c.1830's-1840's
	Pathomsomphôt	c.1830-1837
	Tamrap Thâo Sĭchulâlak	c.1834-1840
	Suphâsit Phra Ruang & the Inscriptions of Wat Phra Chétuphon	1837-1838
	Phra Mahâmontrî (Sap)'s satirical play: Raden Landai	c.1830's
	Lilit Taleng Phâi	c.1830's
	Samutthakhôt Khamchan	1846-1849
	Phra Aphaimanî	c.1837-1840's
C.S.1212 Paramâunchit		1850
	Cambodia's Nong Chronicle	tr.1855 from a copy presented to Mongkut
Royal Autograph Recension		1855
	Phcngsâwadân Phamâ-Râman	tr.1857
Mongkut's Abridged Khmer Chronicle		c.1860-1863
	Nirât Lǫndǫn	1858, first published by D.B. Bradley's printing firm in 1862
	Nangsŭ Sadèng Kitčhânukit	1867
Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Rattanakôsin Ratchakân Thî I-IV		1869
	Phongsâwadân Lâo Phung Dam (PP/3)	1875

Râtchawongpakǫn Mû'ang Nân (Phongsâwadân Lân Nâ Thai)	Phongsâwadân Mû'ang Thèng	1888
	Phrarâtcha Phithî Sipsǫng Dû'an	1888
	Phongsâwadân Lâo Chiang (PP/5)	1899
	Thiao Mû'ang Phra Ruang	1903
		1903
	Phongsâwadân Yônok	1906
	Phongsâwadân Hua Mû'ang Monthon Isân	1907
	Prachum Phongsâwadân Phâk Thî I	1908 first published
	Phrarâtcha Wičhân Čhotmâihet Kromma-luang Narintharathéwî	1908
	Phra Čhenčhîn-aksǫn's Čhotmâihet Chîn	tr.1909
	Khamhaikân Chão Krung Kao	tr.1911
	Phongsâwadân Thai Yai	1913
	Damrong's Khamnam Wâduai Tamnân Nangsư Phongsâwadân	1913
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Damrong's Phrarâtchaphong-sâwadân Ratchakân Thî V		1920's
	Prachum Silâčhârúk Phâk Thî I	1924
	Athibâi Bettalet Rû'ang Phongsawadân Sayâm	1926
	Lak Thai	1928

APPENDIX III (A)

List of Kings of Ayutthayâ from Râmâthibǫdî I to Râmâthibǫdî II

	LP/1680	Chât, Phan/1795 Wannarat/1805?& BM/1808	vV/1640 & Sangīti/1789	Culayud-/ 1802-1811?	Paramânuchit/ 1850	RA/1855
Râmâthibǫdî I	1351-69	1351-69	1351-69	1351-69	1351-69	1351-69
Râmésuan (I)	1369-70	1369-70	1369-71	1369-71	1369-70	1369-70
Bǫrommarâchâ I	1370-88	1370-82	1371-88	1371-82	1370-82	1370-82
Thǫng Lan	7 d.	7 d.	Thǫng Chan, 7 d.			
Râmésuan (II)	1388-95	1382-87	1388-93	1382-87	1382-87	1382-87
Phrayâ Râm	1395-1409	1387-1401	1393-95	1387-1401	1387-1401	1387-1401
Intharâchâ	1409-24	1401-18	1395-1414	1401-18	1401-18	1401-18
Bǫrommarâchâ II	1424-48	1418-34	1414-33	1418-34	1418-34	1418-34
Trailôk at Ayut. & Phitsanulôk betw.	1448-63 1463-88	1434-70	1433-52	1434-49	1434-49	1434-49
Bǫrommarâchâ III	1463-91	1470-73 blank	Intharâchâ 1452-88	Intharâchâ 1449-	Intharâchâ 1449-70	Intharâchâ 1449-73
Râmâthibǫdî II	1491-1529	1473-1509	1488-1525	Ends here	1473-1509	1473-1509

APPENDIX III (B)

Nǫphutthângkûn - Prâsâtthǫng

	LP/1680	Chât, Phan/1795 Wannarat/1805?& BM/1808	vV/1640 & Saṅgīti/1789	Paramânuchit/ 1850	RA/1855
Nǫphutthângkûn	1529-33	1509-13	1529-32	1509-13	1509-13
Son of above	1533 deposed	Ratsadâthirât 1513-14	(R)atthâthirât 1532, 5 months	Ratsadâthirât 1513, 5 months	Ratthâthirât 1513, 5 months
Chaiyarâchâ	1533-46	1514-27	1532-44	1514-27	1514-27
Yǫt Fâ	1546-48	1527-29	1544-46	Kèw Fâ 1527-29	Kèw Fâ 1527-29
Khun Wǫrawongsâ	42ds	5 months	40ds	5 months	5 months
Chakkraphat	1548-68	Chakkraphat (I) 1529-52	1546-61	1529-55	1529-55
Mahin	1568-69	Mahin (I) 1552-54	1561-66	1555-56	1555-56
		Chakkraphat (II) 1554-55			
		Mahin (II) 1555-56			
Mahâthammarâchâ	1569-90	1556-1578	1566-87	1556-78	1556-78
Narésuan (Nârâi)	1590-1605	1578-93	1590-1606	1578-93	1578-93

	Reconstructed from European sources	Chât, Phan/1795 Wannarat/1805? & BM/1808	vV/1640 & Saṅgīti/1789	Paramânuchit/ 1850	RA/1855
Ekâthotsarot/ Râmésuan	1605-10	1593-1610	Râmésuan* 1605-10	1593-1601	1593-1601
Sîsaowaphâk		1601-02		1601-02	1601-02
Songtham	1610-28	1602-27	Intharâchâ 1610-28	1602-27	1602-27
Chetthâthirât	8 months	1627-29	8 months	1627-29	1627-29
Âthitsurawong	1629	Âthittayawong 1629, 6 months	1629, 38 days	Âthittayawong 1629, 6 months	Âthittayawong 1629, 6 months
Prâsâtthọng	1629-56	1629-55	Sîthammarâchâ 1629-vV/1640	1630-55	1630-55
			Saṅgīti/1789 only		
			Sîsuthammarâchâ 1630-47		
			(Â)di(t)yarā(ja)** few months (Âthittayarât)		
			Prâsâtthọng 1647-61		

* Narésuan's younger brother and successor is referred to in the Phrarâtchaphongsâwadân Krung Sî Ayutthayâ compiled after the fall of Ayutthayâ in 1767 as Ekâthotsarot. Râmésuan is probably the right name as documents dating from the first half of the seventeenth century call him by that name. Of these documents, the Khlông Mangtharâ (1614), written by an anonymous Chiang Mai poet, is closest to his reign.

** My reconstruction of a corrupt Pali form, "Diyara", which, I believe, must have occurred as a result of careless copying

APPENDIX III (C)

Châfâ Chai-Suriyâmarin

	Reconstructed from European Sources	Chât	Saṅgīti/1789		Phan/1795 (II)	Phan/1795(I), Wannarat/1805? BM/1808, Paramânuchit & RA
Châofâ Chai		1655-56				1655-56
Sîsuthammarâchâ	1656	2mths 20ds	Anuchâthirât, 1661-64			2mths 20ds
Nârâi	1656-88	1656-88	Dragon 1664			1656-82
			1664-87*	1664-88**		
Phetrâchâ	1688-1703	1688-1703	1687-96	1688-98	1682-1700	1682-97
Phrachâo Sû'a	1703-09	1703-09	1696-1702	1698-1705	1700-06	1697-1706***
Thâisa	1709-33	1709-? ends 1727	called Mahâchôn here		1706-27	1606-1733
			1702-27	1705-31		
Børommakôt	1733-58		Rat 1731		1729-58	1733-58
			1731-57	1731-58		
Phønphinit (Uthumphøn)	10ds		Tiger 1758, 2 months		some days	some days
Suriyâmarin	1758-67		1758-66	1758-67	1758-67	1758-67

*This column is calculated according to the traditional Thai-Chinese method of counting animal years. For instance, if a king ruled between 1664 and 1667, he is said to have ruled four years. This is because his reign covered four animal years: 1664 Dragon, 1665 Snake, 1666 Horse, 1667 Goat.

**This column is calculated according to modern arithmetic.

***Except Phan/1795 (I) which ends apruptly with an entry for the year C.S. 1060, a Hare Year, First of the Decade. This has to be amended to C.S. 1061 (1699) as C.S. 1060 was actually a Tiger Year.

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